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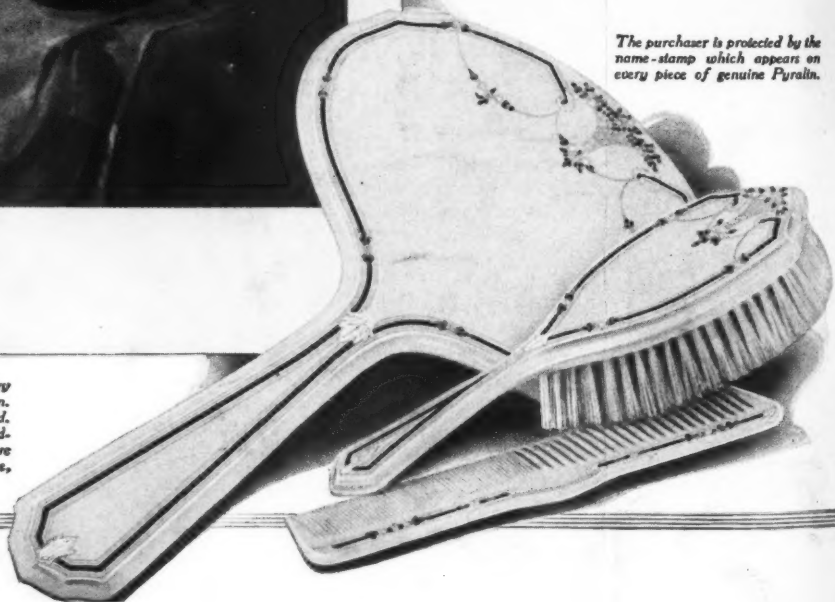
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COSMOPOLITAN

America's Greatest Magazine

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Watch for "Broken Barriers." COSMOPOLITAN is as glad to publish it as you will be glad to read it.

THIS MONTH

IRENE by Harrison Fisher	Cover
WHEN THE YOUNG ARE GROWN. <i>A Poem</i> by Edgar A. Guest	9
Decorated by Robert E. Johnston HAVE YOU A FIXER IN YOUR HOME? <i>A Humorous Editorial</i> by George Ade	10
Decorated by Ray Rohn JEEVES IN THE SPRINGTIME. <i>A Short Story</i> by P. G. Wodehouse	12
Illustrations by T. D. Skidmore THE BREATH OF SCANDAL. <i>A Serial</i> by Edwin Balmer	16
Illustrations by James Montgomery Flagg JUST ONE THING MORE. <i>A Short Story</i> by Gouverneur Morris	22
Illustrations by Gayle Hoskins WHO'S DRINKING IN AMERICA? <i>An Article</i> by William G. Shepherd	29
Illustrated with photographs THE FISH. <i>A Short Story</i> by Arnold Bennett	32
Illustrations by William Meade Prince THE WOMAN OF EXPERIENCE. <i>A Short Story</i> by Albert Payson Terhune	39
Illustrations by H. J. Mowat ALL THEIR CARDS ON THE TABLE. <i>A Short Story</i> by Dana Gatlin	43
Illustrations by Robert E. Johnston THE STAGE TODAY Photographs in Arrigrauvre	49
MEN FORGET. <i>A Short Story</i> by Frank R. Adams	53
Illustrations by Charles D. Mitchell DECEMBER LOVE. <i>A Serial</i> by Robert Hichens	58
Illustrations by W. D. Stevens WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU AMERICAN PARENTS? <i>An Article</i> by Elinor Glyn	65
Illustrated with photographs CASSIDY PAYS HIS BET. <i>A Short Story</i> by James Oliver Curwood	68
Illustrations by Walt Louderback THE FIRST NIGHT. <i>A Serial</i> by Arthur Somers Roche	74
Illustrations by Grant T. Reynard A POT OF PANSIES. <i>A Short Story</i> by Leonard Merrick	81
Illustrations by G. Patrick Nelson STORIES THAT HAVE MADE ME LAUGH. by Montague Glass	86
Illustrations by Rae Irvin	

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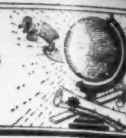
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pert direction in all athletic and outdoor sports combined
with camp life. Homecraft for little girls in Junior Camp.
Address: SECRETARY,
MASSACHUSETTS, Cambridge, 8 Everett Street.

Every day your skin is changing. By the right care, any girl can have a smooth, lovely complexion



Every girl knows— *nothing can make you look right if your skin is not right*

IF your skin is smooth and clear—radiant with freshness and color—you cannot look unattractive, no matter how simple your toilet.

But not even the prettiest clothes will make up for a sallow, lifeless complexion—a skin that is disfigured by blackheads or ugly blemishes.

Don't neglect your skin.

Remember—any girl *can* have a smooth, lovely complexion. Each day your skin is changing—old skin dies, and new forms in its place. By giving this *new skin* the special treatment it needs, you can actually make it over.

Are you using the right treatment for your special type of skin?

There is a special Woodbury treatment for each type of skin.

For instance, if your skin is of the pale, sallow type—it needs the following treatment to stimulate the

pores and blood vessels and give it a clear, fresh, healthy color:

ONCE OR TWICE a week, fill your basin full of hot water—almost boiling hot. Bend over the top of the basin and cover your head with a heavy bath towel, so that no steam can escape. Steam your face for thirty seconds. Now lather a hot cloth with Woodbury's Facial Soap. With this wash your face thoroughly, rubbing the lather well into the skin. Then rinse the skin well, first with warm water, then with cold, and finish by rubbing it for thirty seconds with a piece of ice.

The other nights of the week cleanse your skin in the usual way with Woodbury's Facial Soap and warm water, ending with a dash of cold.

THIS treatment and other complete treatments for all the different types of skin, are given in the booklet that is wrapped around every cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap.

Get a cake of Woodbury's today—begin tonight the treatment your skin needs.

The same qualities that give Woodbury's its beneficial effect on the skin make it ideal for general use. A 25 cent cake lasts a month or six weeks for general toilet use, including any of the special Woodbury treatments.

A complete miniature set of the Woodbury skin preparations

For 25 cents we will send you a complete miniature set of the Woodbury skin preparations, containing:

A trial size cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap
A sample tube of the new Woodbury's Facial Cream

A sample tube of Woodbury's Cold Cream
A sample box of Woodbury's Facial Powder
Together with the treatment booklet, "*A Skin You Love to Touch.*"

Send for this set today. Address The Andrew Jergens Co., 1612 Spring Grove Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio. *If you live in Canada, address The Andrew Jergens Co., Limited, 1612 Sherbrooke St., Perth, Ontario.*

WHEN THE YOUNG ARE GROWN

By Edgar A. Guest

Decorated by Robert E. Johnston

ONCE the house was lovely, but it's lonely here
today.

For time has come an' stained its walls an' called the
young away;

An' all that's left for mother an' for me till life is
through

Is to sit an' tell each other what the children used to do.

We couldn't keep 'em always an' we knew it from the
start:

We knew when they were babies that some day we'd
have to part.

But the years go by so swiftly, an' the littlest one has
flown.

An' there's only me an' mother now left here to live
alone.

Oh, there's just one consolation, as we're sittin' here
at night,

They've grown to men an' women, an' we brought 'em
up all right;

We've watched 'em as we've loved 'em an' they're
splendid, every one.

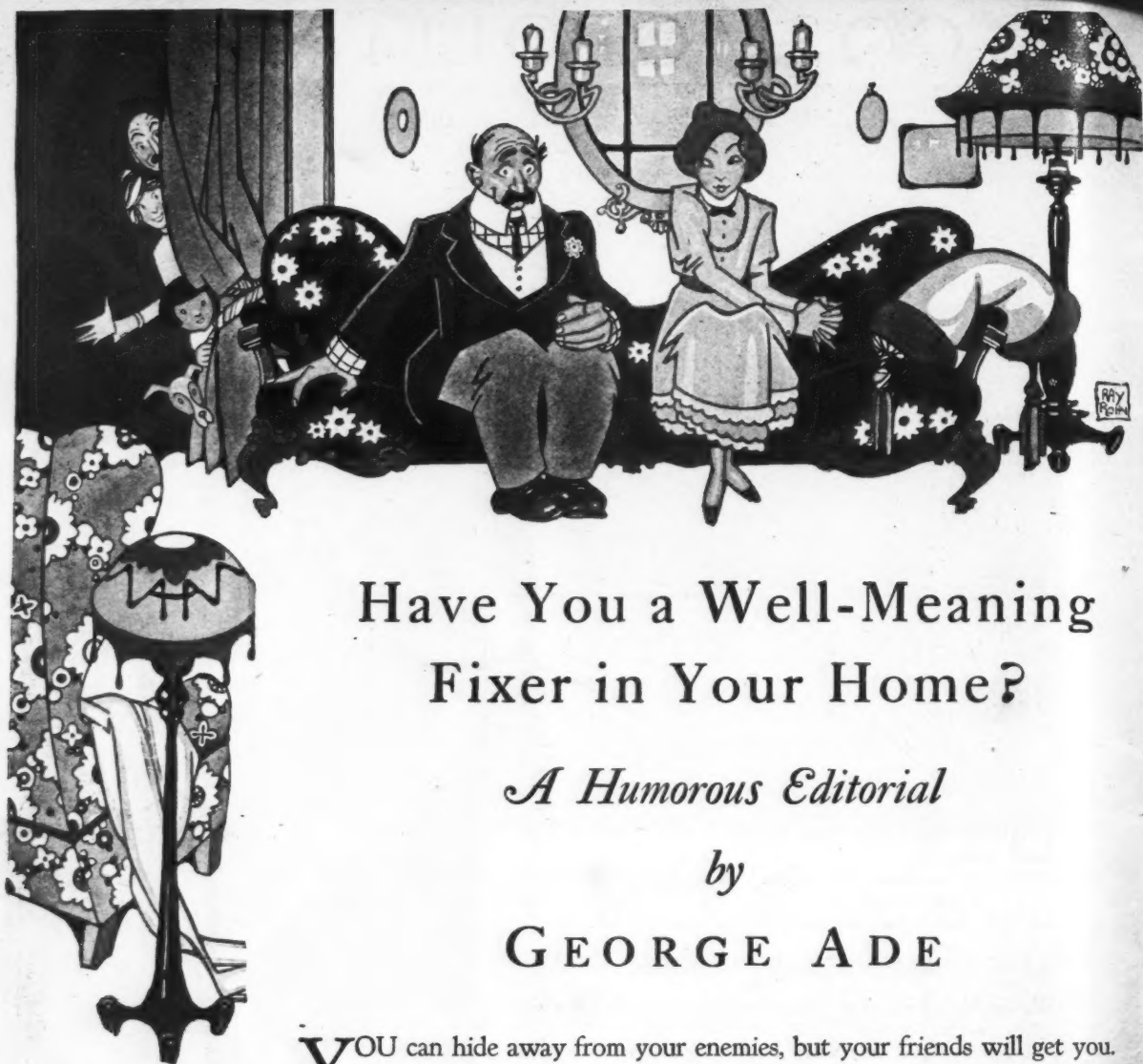
An' we feel the Lord won't blame us for the way our
work was done.

They're clean an' kind an' honest, an' the world re-
spects 'em, too;

That's the dream of parents always, an' our dreams
have all come true.

So although the house is lonely an' sometimes our eyes
grow wet,

We are proud of them an' happy an' we've nothing to
regret.



Have You a Well-Meaning Fixer in Your Home?

A Humorous Editorial

by

GEORGE ADE

Whenever Herb and Ella get together, all the arrangers run away and leave them.

YOU can hide away from your enemies, but your friends will get you.

No man ever woke up in the morning with a case of side-way jumps and said "My enemies did this to me."

Suggested marking for a headstone: "He was the best-liked man in his class at the varsity and wherever he went he was royally entertained."

The social outcast may have regrets but he never has the gout.

Our beloved Riley of Indiana once in a while consented to recite his poems in public. He had a genius for character acting. As a story-teller he was delightful beyond all description. Whenever he appeared on a rostrum, the auditorium was jammed with well-dressed people leaning forward. His readings brought him many dollars and gave happiness to the kind of "folks" for whom he had an affection. And yet, for many years, he refused to go on tour. "If I could slip into a town," he would explain, "and detour to the hotel and brush up, and then wander around and look in the windows, and get a snack and go over to the hall and deliver the show, and then drift back to the hotel and go to bed, I wouldn't mind the trouping. The trouble is, in every town the arrangers get hold of me. They are the nicest people in the world and they are bursting with unselfish designs. They surround me with committees and exhibit me. They put me into clammy spare bedrooms and tempt me with huge portions of rich food. They keep me up at night. They crowd in on me and talk to me about the pieces I have written. They smother me with kindnesses. I never have discovered any tactful method of

convincing them that I would like to be let alone. After enduring all forms of hospitality, I have learned that to escape the horrors of being entertained, I must remain in quarantine."

Popularity and pepsin go hand in hand under the electric lights. Everybody is trying to do something for the favored children of fortune who are already loaded down with Christmas presents.

Self-appointed committees are all the time assigning to themselves picturesque duties to be performed on high platforms. The helpless spectators and victims are never consulted in advance.

Too many fixers are trying to regulate the wheels of Destiny and make the solar system an auxiliary to some local club with a membership of about 150.

While the first-born is chewing on rubber and inspecting the chandelier, the arrangers in the next room are plotting to make him an attorney at law, although the star under which he was born lights the way to a long and useful career as floorwalker in a department store.

Women of high voltage are especially keen as arrangers. The married woman decides that Herbert, her husband's bachelor friend (with the false eyebrows), is just the man for Ella, a hold-over from the puffsleeve period. So she invites the two case-hardened waifs out for the week-end and issues secret orders that whenever Herb and Ella can be assembled together on one settee, then all the others are to run away and leave them. And yet you may have read in a book somewhere that woman is man's best friend!

Just when you get your program all blocked out, some promoter comes along with a blue pencil and begins to edit—because he likes you. Always with the best of intentions. The road to hell is paved with good intentions and the main contract has been sub-let in a thousand different directions.

The arrangers have put us on a diet, hid the cocktail shaker and spanked the big-eyed vamp of the movies. They lay back the covers for us every evening at 11:15. Before you bust over on Sunday, find out what instructions the police have received from the arrangers.

Nearly everything is being done for us. Also to us. The wails of the sinful minority are drowned by the hallelujahs of those who never enjoyed the privilege of being corrupted. At least, the unhappy ones have the satisfaction of knowing that before long they will be as standardized as anything that can be purchased f. o. b. Detroit.

Self-appointed committees are all the time assigning to themselves picturesque duties



*Beginning a
new series of
short stories
by the
author of
"Archie,"
who made
all
America
laugh.*



Jeeves in the Springtime

by P. G. WODEHOUSE

Illustrations by T. D. Skidmore

"JEEVES," I said, coming away from the window.
"Sir?" said Jeeves. He had been clearing the breakfast things, but at the sound of the young master's voice he cheesed it courteously.
"It's a topping morning, Jeeves."
"Decidedly, sir."
"Spring and all that."
"Yes, sir."
"In the spring, Jeeves, a livelier iris gleams upon the burnished dove."
"So I have been informed, sir."
"Right ho! Then bring me my whangee, my yellowest shoes, and the old green Homburg. I'm going into the park to do pastoral dances."
"Very good, sir."

I don't know if you know that sort of feeling you get on these days round about the end of April and the beginning of May, when the sky's a light blue with cotton-wool clouds and there's a bit of a breeze blowing from the west? Kind of uplifted feeling.

Romantic, if you know what I mean. I'm not much of a ladies' man, but on this particular morning it seemed to me that what I really wanted was some charming girl to buzz up and ask me to save her from assassins or something. So that it was a bit of an anticlimax when I merely ran into young Bingo Little, looking perfectly foul in a mauve satin tie with crimson horseshoes.

"Hullo, Bertie," said Bingo.
"My God, man!" I gargled. "The cravat! The gents' neck-wear! Why? For what reason?"
"Oh, the tie?" He blushed. "I—er—I was given it."

He seemed embarrassed, so I dropped the subject. Always the gentleman. We toddled along a bit and sat down on a couple of chairs by the Serpentine. Conversation languished. Bingo was staring straight ahead of him in a glassy sort of manner.

"I say, Bertie," he said after a pause of about an hour and a quarter.
"Hullo?"

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"Hello, Mabel," said Bingo with a sort of gulp. The man was goggling. He looked like the Soul's Awakening done in pink. "You see, I'm wearing your tie," he blundered on.

like Bingo. He has come a bit too late, of course, to get into any of those books on *Great Lovers of History*, but a hundred years from now any writer who leaves him out will only be touching the fringe of his subject. At school he had the finest collection of actresses' photographs of anyone of his time; and at Oxford his romantic nature was a byword.

"You'd better come along and meet her at lunch," he said, looking at his watch.

"A ripe suggestion," I said. "Where are you meeting her? At the Ritz?"

"Near the Ritz."

He was geographically accurate. About fifty yards east of the Ritz there is one of those blighted tea-and-bun shops you see dotted about all over London, and into this, if you'll believe me, young Bingo dived like a homing rabbit; and before I had time to say a word we were wedged in at a table, on the brink of a silent pool of coffee left there by an early luncher.

I'm bound to say I couldn't quite follow the development of the scenario. Bingo, while not absolutely rolling in the stuff, has always had a fairish amount of the ready. Apart from what he got from his uncle—old Mortimer Little; you've probably heard of Little's Liniment, *It Limbers Up The Legs*; he ran that till he turned it into a company and retired with a pile—I say, apart from what he got from the above, who gave him a pretty decent allowance, Bingo being his only relative and presumably his heir, I knew that Bingo had finished up the jumping season well on

the right side of the ledger, having collected a parcel over the Lincolnshire. Why, then, was he lunching the girl at this god-forsaken eatery? It couldn't be because he was hard up.

Just then the waitress arrived. Rather a pretty girl.

"Aren't we going to wait?" I started to say to Bingo, thinking it somewhat thick that, in addition to asking a girl to lunch with him in a place like this, he should fling himself on the foodstuffs before she turned up; when I caught sight of his face, and stopped.

The man was goggling. His entire map was suffused with a rich blush. He looked like the Soul's Awakening done in pink.

"Hullo, Mabel," he said, with a sort of gulp.

"Hullo," said the girl.

"Mabel," said Bingo, "this is Bertie Wooster, a pal of mine."

"Pleased to meet you," she said. "Nice morning."

"Fine," I said.

"You see I'm wearing the tie," said Bingo.

"It suits you beautiful," said the girl.

Personally, if anyone had told me that a tie like that suited me, I should have risen and struck them in the mazzard, regardless of their age and sex; but poor old Bingo simply got all flustered with gratification and smirked in the most gruesome manner.

"Well, what's it going to be today?" asked the girl, introducing the business touch into the conversation.

"Do you like the name Mabel?"

"No."

"No?"

"No!"

"You don't think there's a kind of music in the word, like the wind rustling gently through the tree tops?"

"No."

He seemed disap; 'nted for a moment, then cheered up.

"Of course, you wouldn't. You always were a fat-headed worm without any soul, weren't you?"

"Just as you say. Who is she? Tell me all."

For I realized now that poor old Bingo was going through it once again. Ever since I have known him—and we were at school together—he has been perpetually falling in love with some one, generally in the spring, which seems to act on him like magic. I've always thought that Romeo must have been a good deal

Jeeves in the Springtime

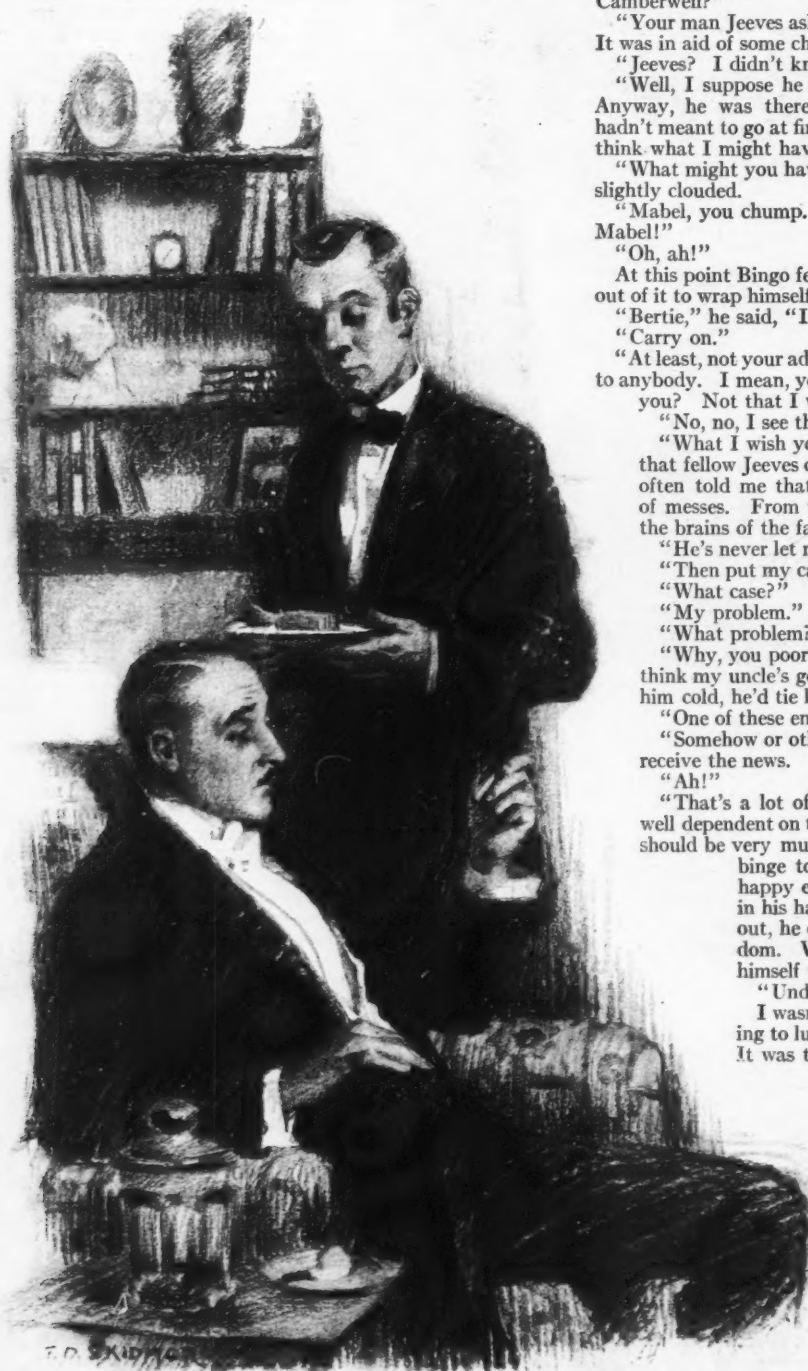
Bingo studied the menu devoutly.

"I'll have a cup of cocoa, cold veal and ham pie, slice of fruit cake and a macaroon. Same for you, Bertie?"

I gazed at the blighter, revolted. That he would have been a pal of mine all these years and think me capable of insulting the old tum with this sort of stuff cut me to the quick.

"Or how about a bit of hot steak pudding with a sparkling limado to wash it down?" said Bingo.

You know, the way love can change a fellow is really frightful to contemplate. This chappie before me, who spoke in this absolutely careless way of macaroons and limado, was the man I had seen in happier days telling the head waiter at Claridge's exactly how he wanted the chef to prepare the *sole frit au gourmet aux champignons* and saying he would jolly well sling it back if it wasn't just right. Ghastly! Ghastly!



"Jeeves," I said. "I want your advice."

A roll and butter and a small coffee seemed the only things on the list that hadn't been specially prepared by the nastier-minded members of the Borgia family for people they had a particular grudge against, so I chose them, and Mabel hopped it.

"Well?" said Bingo rapturously.

I took it that he wanted my opinion of the female poisoner who had just left us.

"Very nice," I said.

He seemed dissatisfied.

"You don't think she's the most wonderful girl you ever saw?" he said wistfully.

"Oh, absolutely!" I said, to appease the blighter. "Where did you meet her?"

"At a subscription dance at Camberwell."

"What on earth were you doing at a subscription dance at Camberwell?"

"Your man Jeeves asked me if I would buy a couple of tickets. It was in aid of some charity or other."

"Jeeves? I didn't know he went in for that sort of thing."

"Well, I suppose he has to relax a bit every now and then. Anyway, he was there, swinging a dashed efficient shoe. I hadn't meant to go at first, but I turned up for a lark. Oh, Bertie, think what I might have missed!"

"What might you have missed?" I asked, the old lemon being slightly clouded.

"Mabel, you chump. If I hadn't gone I shouldn't have met Mabel!"

"Oh, ah!"

At this point Bingo fell into a species of trance, and only came out of it to wrap himself round the pie and macaroon.

"Bertie," he said, "I want your advice."

"Carry on."

"At least, not your advice, because that wouldn't be much good to anybody. I mean, you're a pretty consummate old ass, aren't you? Not that I want to hurt your feelings, of course."

"No, no, I see that."

"What I wish you would do is to put the whole thing to that fellow Jeeves of yours and see what he suggests. You've often told me that he has helped other pals of yours out of messes. From what you tell me, he's by way of being the brains of the family."

"He's never let me down yet."

"Then put my case to him."

"What case?"

"My problem."

"What problem?"

"Why, you poor fish, my uncle, of course. What do you think my uncle's going to say to all this? If I sprang it on him cold, he'd tie himself in knots on the hearth rug."

"One of these emotional johnnies, eh?"

"Somehow or other his mind has got to be prepared to receive the news. But how?"

"Ah!"

"That's a lot of help, that 'Ah!' You see, I'm pretty well dependent on the old boy. If he cut off my allowance, I should be very much in the soup. So you put the whole binge to Jeeves and see if he can't scare up a happy ending somehow. Tell him my future is in his hands, and that, if the wedding bells ring out, he can rely on me, even unto half my kingdom. Well, call it ten quid. Jeeves would exert himself with ten quid on the horizon, what?"

"Undoubtedly," I said.

I wasn't in the least surprised at Bingo's wanting to lug Jeeves into his private affairs like this. It was the first thing I would have thought of

doing myself if I had been in any hole of any description. Most fellows, no doubt, are all for having their valets confine their activities to creasing trousers and what not without trying to run the home, but it's different with Jeeves. Almost from the first day he came to me I have looked on him as a sort of guide, philosopher and friend. Whether his parents fed him almost entirely on fish in his youth, I don't know; but the fact remains that he is a bird of the ripest intellect, full of bright ideas. If anybody could fix things for poor old Bingo, he could.

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The good old persp. was bedewing my forehead fairly lavishly. I don't know when I've been so rattled.

I stated the case to him that night after dinner.

"Jeeves."

"Sir?"

"Are you busy just now?"

"No, sir."

"I mean, not doing anything in particular?"

"No, sir. It is my practice at this hour to read some improving book, but, if you desire my services, this can easily be postponed, or, indeed, abandoned altogether."

"Well, I want your advice. It's about Mr. Little."

"Young Mr. Little, sir, or the elder Mr. Little, his uncle, who lives in Pounceby Gardens?"

Jeeves seems to know everything. Most amazing thing. I'd been pally with Bingo practically all my life, and yet I didn't remember ever having heard that his uncle lived anywhere in particular.

"How did you know he lived in Pounceby Gardens?" I said.

"I am on terms of some intimacy with the elder Mr. Little's cook, sir. In fact, there is an understanding."

I'm bound to say that this gave me a bit of a start. Somehow I'd never thought of Jeeves going in for that sort of thing.

"Do you mean you're engaged?"

"It may be said to amount to that, sir."

"Well, well!"

"She is a remarkably excellent cook, sir," said Jeeves as though he felt called on to give some explanation. "What was it you wished to ask me about Mr. Little?"

I sprang the details on him.

"And that's how the matter stands, Jeeves," I said. "I think we ought to rally round a trifle and help poor old Bingo put the thing through. Tell me about old Mr. Little. What sort of a chap is he?"

"A somewhat curious character, sir. Since retiring from busi-

ness he has become a great recluse, and now devotes himself almost entirely to the pleasures of the table."

"Greedy hog, you mean?"

"I would not, perhaps, take the liberty of describing him in precisely those terms, sir. He is what is usually called a gourmet. Very particular about what he eats, and for that reason sets a high value on Miss Watson's services."

"The cook?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, it looks to me as though our best plan would be to shoot young Bingo in on him after dinner one night. Melting mood, I mean to say, and all that."

"The difficulty is, sir, that at the moment Mr. Little is on a diet, owing to an attack of gout."

"Things begin to look wobbly."

"No, sir, I fancy that the elder Mr. Little's misfortune may be turned to the younger Mr. Little's advantage. I was speaking the other day to Mr. Little's valet, and he was telling me that it has become his principal duty to read to Mr. Little in the evenings. If I were in your place, sir, I should send young Mr. Little to read to his uncle."

"Nephew's devotion, you mean? Old man touched by kindly action, what?"

"Partly that, sir. But I would rely more on young Mr. Little's choice of literature."

"That's no good. Jolly old Bingo has a kind face, but when it comes to literature he stops at the *Sporting Times*."

"That difficulty may be overcome. I would be happy to select books for Mr. Little to read. Perhaps I might explain my idea further?"

"I can't say I quite grasp it yet."

"The method which I advocate is what, I believe, the advertisers call direct suggestion, sir, consisting (Continued on page 114)



If you suddenly found that your father had gone outside his home for love—what would you do? How would you face—

The Breath of Scandal

Illustrations by

James Montgomery Flagg

MARJORIE already had obtained her cloak and had put it on and also had her carriage boots over her slippers when Billy found her at the end of the empty room where Gregg had left her. Billy had put on his overcoat and was carrying his hat which he thrust on his head as he came to Marjorie so he could give her both his hands.

"Gregg's told you," Marjorie said quietly, but her hands were quivering as he seized them and attempted vainly to reassure her.

"Yes," Billy released her hands and suddenly enfolded her in his big arms, drawing her against him. "Oh, Marjorie!" he whispered.

"Father will be all right, Billy!" she gasped, tears blurring her eyes. "We'll not lose him. Did Gregg tell you the telephone number?"

"No. He's gone to get his car. He'll take us right there, Marjorie."

"That's best, of course," Marjorie accepted, releasing herself from him. "Gregg must be ready now, Billy."

She started abruptly for the door and he followed, confused a little as people now were pouring down the stairs and seeing them. But Marjorie paid no attention to them, and Billy overtook her just as a boy drew back the door to the carriage steps outside which Gregg's car stood.

Marjorie looked about, saw Billy behind her and, remembering her argument with Gregg, she leaned forward toward the car and asked Gregg directly: "You'll take me to father?"

"Yes," Gregg said, and she got in beside him; Billy pushed in next her and closed the door.

"I suppose it was an automobile accident," Marjorie said a few minutes after they had started.

"Yes," said Billy. "The roads are all ice tonight."

"Maybe," Gregg objected. "But likely enough a holdup. I'm afraid. They're at it every night in the city; and your father's not a man just to put his hands up."

"No," said Marjorie with pitiful pride, shuddering.

Billy put his arm about her; he was instantly angry at Gregg for describing a more serious event when she might have been satisfied with imagining some minor injury from a skidding car.

Gregg suggested nothing more; he had felt that this was a good moment to prepare Marjorie to innocently explain to herself the sort of injury to her father which he expected they would find; but he did not dare go beyond that.

Marjorie soon relaxed and let herself lie against Billy and she tried not to think and fear; she needed the feeling of strength and protection about her—Gregg knew—since that voice over

The Men in the Story

GREGG MOWBRY: A young Chicagoan, successful in business—active, alert, likable—who finds himself in two difficult positions. First, he is in love with Marjorie Hale, fiancée of his best friend. Second, being told of Mr. Hale's attachment for Mrs. Russell, he has had to tell Marjorie's father that Russell, divorced from his wife, is jealously seeking him with a pistol.

BILL WHITTAKER: Gregg's roommate, deeply in love with Marjorie, who in turn seems in love with him. Bill is extremely serious minded, rather Puritanical, and is shocked even at the fashionable gown which Marjorie wears to the Lovells' dance.

CHARLES HALE: Father of Marjorie; a hearty, clean-cut man of forty-seven; the active head of a big business; known throughout Chicago as an upstanding citizen. On the night of the dance he leaves "for St. Louis," but Gregg knows he is going to Mrs. Russell, and warns him.

INNOCENT, as every nice girl is innocent, Marjorie meets life in the raw. She has to decide! Is her father wicked? Or is society wrong? These are the questions that are made alive for every thoughtful American in this great new novel—

by
**EDWIN
BALMER**

—author of “Resurrection Rock”
and other notable books

the telephone had told her that the strength and love, which had guarded her all her life, were in danger of slipping away. Gregg ached to offer her his strength; he gripped, tense and tight, to the steering wheel to keep his hands from her; he dared not even touch her now that Billy had his arm about her; Gregg feared, if he did anything at all, he would thrust Bill from her and take her for himself.

“It’s the first time anything’s happened to father,” Marjorie said. “I’ve never known him to be even sick before.”

“He’ll come through this, dear little girl,” Billy encouraged her. But for a while she only became more frightened.

Gregg, keeping to himself and trying not to think too much about her, heard her whispering: “Spare father!” It was a sort of prayer.

Then Billy gathered her hands within his own and, bending, kissed hers tenderly. “Dear, dear little Marjorie,” he said again, “I’ll see that everything possible is done.” It seemed to him that somehow, with his size and strength, he could stand between her and anything.

But Gregg was letting himself lapse to no illusions of what might come up to him in a few minutes now; and, as he thought of it, the idea that Marjorie’s father might be dead seemed to him a simple event to deal with—provided the fact of his death was all that Marjorie must learn. But he knew that the chances were that, by this time, Charles Hale’s private affairs had become public property and that when Marjorie and Billy and he arrived at Clearedge Street they would find a crowd of curious, babbling people about the building where Mrs. Russell lived; they would find a police ambulance and officers; reporters and flashlight photographers. In that case—well there was nothing that he could do; nothing that anyone could do.

But if it was not yet known, he might be of some use; and the fact that the woman who had sent for the doctor for Mr. Hale had not called a local surgeon, but had summoned Dr. Grantham from far away, gave Gregg ground for hoping that she might have concealed what had happened.

Gregg lit a cigarette and, without looking about, he extended his case toward Marjorie and Bill.

Marjorie ignored it; in a moment she released herself from Billy and sat up in a reaction from her deepest fears; she spoke almost with confidence that they would find her father in no real danger. “He’s always been so strong,” she said; and she busied herself with the small consequences of their flight from the dance.

“Billy, did you make any explanation to Mrs. Lovell?”

“No; sorry. I didn’t see her.”

“She’s such a mob tonight she’ll never miss us.”

But as the car rushed on, again they lost confidence; they were



JAMES MONTGOMERY FLASS

The Women in the Story

MARJORIE HALE: She worships her father; he is everything to her. As Gregg reflected on the night of the dance, she was always prettier, always sweeter than he had expected. She took his breath away. When the news comes in at the dance that her father has been hurt, she is prostrated, but she controls herself and demands to be taken to the scene of the accident. Gregg knows that this is Mrs. Russell’s apartment, but Bill does not.

MRS. HALE: A clubwoman of the modern sort, who has let her social and other ambitions rule her life. She seems to be fond of her husband and daughter, but her interest is centered in her many committees. She is not exactly of a cold type, but there seems to be no warmth about her.

SYBIL RUSSELL: Married during the war, and divorced shortly afterward, she is supporting herself in business and living modestly in an apartment on Clearedge Street. It is with hers that Mr. Hale’s name has lately been linked. No one knows anything more about her, and all Gregg knows is that Mr. Hale has been seen going to her apartment.

reaching the gay, garishly lit area of refreshment places, resplendent drug stores and motion picture palaces from which people were pouring from the last show; they passed the tall new apartment hotels and flat-buildings converted into hotels and turned into a transverse street of similar character; then Gregg turned again and drove up a darker, more quiet and respectable looking street with a big block of small apartments on the corner and with six-flat structures beyond. Gregg stared ahead down the street. It was all quiet, thank God! No lights but the ordinary street lamps; no cars but a single one, with red tail light, at the curb; nobody about but a man or two walking along in an ordinary way.

Gregg took a long breath and went on more slowly almost to the end of the block where he saw 4689 in the transom over the door of a good-looking, three-apartment building which stood separated by eight or ten feet from the flats on both sides. The first floor was lighted; the second dark; the third lighted. The car with red tail light was standing before this number and a chauffeur in uniform paced up and down, striking his hands together in the cold. Gregg drew up behind the waiting car and Billy got out, helped Marjorie out and clasped her arm as she turned toward the building. The chauffeur approached them; and Marjorie said, "You're Dr. Grantham's driver?"

"Yes."

"I'm Miss Hale; do you know how my father is?"

"No, miss."

"How long has the doctor been here?"

"About fifteen minutes."

"Which flat are they in?"

"The third floor, miss."

Marjorie made for the building. "You coming?" she called nervously to Gregg, who was still in the car, leaning forward.

"Lost my wheel key," Gregg said; and Billy impatiently left Marjorie and stepped back to him.

"You take her in that front door, Bill; ring there and wait," Gregg directed. "Don't disturb anybody else if they don't let you in at once. Maybe they're operating on him now."

"What're you going to do?"

"I'm going around the back and try to find out what's happened and how he is. Maybe, if it's bad, I'd better try to prepare—"

Billy's big frame was shaking visibly. "Maybe, Gregg," he agreed. "I understand. All right." He hurried toward the building to catch Marjorie who, unable to wait, was opening the entrance door.

Gregg jumped down and took the narrow walk to the rear of the building; finding there the usual, outside stair to a tier of three back porches, he ran up to the third and found himself outside an ordinary back door of deal, with a glass pane in the upper half. A light was burning on the other side but a yellow blind had been pulled down over the glass. He heard a buzzer, undoubtedly rung by Marjorie and Billy at the front entrance. No one seemed to make reply; indeed, there was no other sound from the apartment and when Gregg pressed the button beside the door, he merely set going another buzzer without rousing response; so he tried the knob and found, as he expected, that the door was locked. A window a few feet off at the end of the porch also was locked and its shade was down. Gregg returned to the door and pounded upon it, still receiving no response and hearing only the continued signal from the vestibule bell; so he picked up an empty milk bottle from the porch and struck it through the pane above the knob and reached in, unbolted the door and opened it and stepped into a kitchen. He had closed the door behind him and advanced half-way across the room before a swinging door on the other side was pushed open and a young woman appeared.

She was quivering with fright and her eyes were red from crying; but Gregg hardly thought of her state. For the instant, indeed, he was not chiefly anxious as to whether Charles Hale was living or dead. What was above everything else to him at that moment was the type of woman he found here; and his pulse leaped with relief at what he saw. He had not been simple enough to suppose that all women, who lived like Mrs. Russell, showed themselves for what they were; of course he knew some did, but this girl did not.

At his first glance at her, there seemed absolutely nothing about her to suggest any irregularity or abnormality in her code of conduct; she was a decidedly good-looking woman, evidently less than thirty, with regular, definite features, with brown eyes and attractive brown hair, which was evidently all her own; and its color was its own, Gregg estimated; and she was without rouge or even lip-dye. There was, indeed, no suggestion of the

blonding or artificial make-up about her which, in the minds of innocents, marks the jade; there was not even noticeable weakness or pliability of feature nor voluptuousness of figure. She had a good figure but Gregg would not have immediately commented on it, if he were not so consciously valuing her; for she had nothing of the habit of obtruding physical charms. "There is an independent and competent girl," one would have first thought, casually meeting her. She looked like one preferring and accustomed to live by her brain rather than by her body.

She was dressed more than decently—more than modestly, in fact; for she was wearing a brown woolen gown, high in the neck, a dress of the sort that Marjorie and her friends wore about their own homes in afternoons when nothing in particular was going on. While Gregg was making this survey of her, she was looking over him and now, clenching her hands:

"Who are you?" she demanded. "What do you mean by breaking in here?"

"I'm a friend of Mr. Hale's. My name's Mowbry. How is he?"

"How?" she repeated, retreating a little as Gregg boldly advanced. Whether or not she might have heard his name and now recognized him, Gregg could not tell; but something about his reply partially reassured her.

"Is he living?" Gregg demanded of her, definitely. "Or is he dead?"

"He's living," she replied, her mind now able to go back from the interruption of this stranger to the man she was trying to protect.

"But badly hurt?"

"Very badly," she said in such a whisper that Gregg's voice too went lower.

"I see," he said, quietly. "Who are you, please?"

"I?" Her mind had not come back to herself and Gregg again.

"I mean are you Sybil Russell?"

"Yes, I am."

"Who else is here?"

"Dr. Grantham and his assistant."

"A man?"

"Yes; another man."

"Nobody else?"

"No. They're in there together," she jerked her head vaguely behind her.

Gregg stepped closer to her; she started again to retreat but did not and stood holding the door open and half supporting herself by it. Behind her was a dining room with a heavy, handsome rug and a walnut table—Sheraton, though Gregg recognized only that it was of good design; over it was a light shaded by a Tiffany bowl and showing a sideboard and chairs of the same pleasing design as the table; a Japanese birdcage with a canary hung before a window. No one was in the room; and no voice was audible from elsewhere in the apartment. But the buzzer in the kitchen rang again and again.

"What's happened here?" Gregg demanded of Mrs. Russell.

"He shot him!"

"Who?"

"George."

"You mean George Russell who was your husband."

She nodded, her hand convulsing tighter in her grip of the door.

"Then what did he do?"

"He got out! . . . I don't know anything more than that!"

"Where did he shoot him?"

She put a hand to her breast.

"Where were they?" Gregg pressed on.

"In front."

"Outside?"

"No; in the living room. He'd just come—"

"Mr. Hale you mean?"

"Yes; George was waiting for him here."

"You knew that?"

"Yes; he'd come in with me. George had. I thought I'd better bring him in. I thought I could do something with him in here. I was trying to; I think I could have but just at the wrong minute. Charles came."

Gregg winced and she saw it and stopped.

"Go on," he commanded.

"He tried to interfere for me, Charles did. He thought George would hurt me. I could look out for myself. I had; but Charles . . ."

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JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

"It's Marjorie, father dear. I'm here now, father." Her voice broke pitifully.

thought jumped to Marjorie pressing the bell and listening for response.

"Never mind! Did they hear the shot downstairs?"

"Those people are away."

"Did anyone else?"

"Nobody seemed to."

"All right," Gregg stepped forward and passed her and went through the dining room to the hall where he found a bedroom door open; he glanced in and saw two men in shirtsleeves working over Mr. Hale, who was lying in bed with the upper part of his body bared. Neither the man whom Gregg recognized as Dr. Grantham nor the other looked up and Gregg immediately went on to the living room.

This was a large room with a hardwood floor almost completely covered by Oriental rugs of quiet patterns and furnished by a pretty table in dark mahogany, a lounge and chairs and a woman's writing desk, closed; by a graceful, small grand piano and bench; the lighting was from large, shaded lamps in soft

colors; and there were a few—and only a few—good etchings on the walls; altogether it was an agreeable, pleasant room in good quiet taste, Gregg observed while he searched for signs of the attack which had been made there. Mrs. Russell followed him and aided him by staring with a shudder at stains on one of the rugs near the piano. Gregg pulled up this rug, pushed others about to cover the place and carried the stained rug to a closet off the hall and thrust it in.

"Do you see anything else to be got out?" he demanded of Mrs. Russell.

"No," she said, staring at him; then, dully, she asked, "Why?"

"Mr. Hale's daughter is below at the front; that is she ringing."

"Oh!"

"She has to come up. There is no way to stop her, without making things worse than they are. But she must not know what has happened here. You can understand that."

"Yes," Mrs. Russell said.

Dr. Grantham appeared behind her; he had put on his coat

and it was evident that he had done for his patient all that he could do.

"How is he, doctor?" Gregg asked.

"He is unconscious. We have a chance to keep life in him," Grantham jerked in his abrupt, practical way. "But we must get him to an operating room. I've sent for an ambulance. Who do you say is downstairs? Marjorie?"

"Yes, doctor."

Grantham looked Gregg over; the doctor had no doubt of what he had to do; he questioned only the discretion of Gregg whom he challenged:

"I've seen you at the Hale's; what's your name?"

"Mowbry; I'm the one who talked from Evanston to your girl. I happened to know Mr. Hale was here," Gregg explained himself. "Marjorie, of course, didn't. Whittaker, who's engaged to her, is with her. He doesn't know anything about this. Does your assistant know Marjorie?"

"Carson?" said the doctor. "No."

"Would she know him?"

"I don't think so. Why?"

"Then can't he be Russell for a few minutes? You see what I mean, doctor. They've got to come up or they'll surely find out. Doctor, Mr. Hale told them he was going down to meet a man on business; that must be Russell. Your assistant Carson is him. He and his wife were out; they'd been out for dinner; they were just coming back when they met Mr. Hale outside and Russell—that's Carson—brought him up here to talk business. They all came up together. The flat here was empty; there was a man in it; they surprised him when they came in with their key. He tried to get out the rear and Mr. Hale and Russell—that's Carson—chased him; he had to shoot to get away and he shot Mr. Hale. Oh, it's full of holes, doctor; I know it! But something like that's got to do! You'll try it, sir! Marjorie won't be able to think much; maybe we can put it over together! . . . Anyway, I've got to go down and let them in now or no one knows what they'll do."

Gregg opened the front door and ran down the two flights of stairs to the vestibule. Billy had begun to pound upon the door to the stairway; he had succeeded, indeed, in rousing the people in the first floor apartment; for their door opened as Gregg came by, but it closed again at once. For Billy, seeing Gregg, had stopped knocking; he stepped back a little and put his arm about Marjorie. Gregg opened the door.

"He's alive, Marjorie," he said to her, almost steadily. "Everybody up there was busy. Dr. Grantham and Russell and his wife. That's why nobody could answer till I got in the back way."

"What was it, Gregg?" she demanded of him.

They were all on the stairs now. Of course Marjorie could think of nothing else now but the injury to her father; now she could not question anything he should say; but he realized that everything he said would stick in her mind, however completely she might ignore anything at this moment.

"A bullet wound, Marjorie. A man fired at him; a man who was in the apartment up there." So far he was safe; or, at least, if this was not safe to tell her, there was no way for him to do better. For those were facts which, in an instant, she must learn and which in no way could be concealed from her. And he could not think again whether the rest of his story for her would hold with her later; he had to give some explanation



immediately and, having nothing better, he gave it as they all ran up the stairs. "Your father'd come down here to see Mr. Russell, Marjorie, you see. He was stopping in here to see him on business before taking the train. Mr. and Mrs. Russell had been out. He met them just as they were coming back; they all came in together. They found a man in the flat; your father and Russell went for him and he fired . . ."

Gregg saved his breath; they were at the door of the third apartment which Gregg had left unlatched behind him. They went in and Marjorie was grasping Dr. Grantham; in a moment she was in the room with her father. Billy went with her; but Gregg did not. He dropped back into the living room and stood there, intending not to hear; but he did hear Marjorie trying to speak to her father. Her father, of course, was still unconscious; he could not hear. Best for him, Gregg thought; for Gregg himself went weak and sick. He had not known, until this moment, how much Marjorie loved her father; likely

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Bill reached forward as though snatching Marjorie from Hell. "Don't touch that woman!" he blurted.

JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

enough, he thought, she had not realized it until now. She would not have. Nothing had ever happened to him before, she had said; she had never known him even sick; and now to find him dying, probably! That fine, big, happy, strong man who was her father! Faith in him and unsuspicion; why they were so absolute and natural to her that she could not even be aware of them. For her to think of herself trusting her father was to hold an idea of the possibility of the opposite which never could have occurred to her.

"Father!" Gregg had to hear again the sweet, steady voice. She made it steady when speaking to him; she would! And the sweetness of it seemed to halt Gregg's heart. "It's Marjorie, father dear; I'm here now, father . . . father . . ." Then: "I know he doesn't hear me, doctor. I know; but . . ." her voice almost broke; and no one else spoke. She was kissing her father. Gregg knew, for a sob broke from Billy; and Grantham had to clear his throat.

"Come now, come now," Billy managed in a minute.

Billy brought her out of the bedroom and Gregg jerked himself together. "Dr. Grantham's sent for an ambulance to take him to a hospital," he said cheerfully. "It ought to be here any minute now."

"What hospital?" Marjorie asked.

"St. Luke's, I suppose," Gregg replied, watching her. She was gazing about the room but not critically or even wonderingly. He felt sure she was not thinking about the apartment at all; or about Mr. and Mrs. Russell whom, she supposed, inhabited it; her eyes merely wandered absently. She still was thinking wholly of her father and now after the shock of seeing him, she was shaking so violently that she seemed scarcely able to stand.

"Sit down here, Marjorie, or lie down," Billy begged her, emotionally; and he cleared the silk cushions from the lounge.

She stared at him, suddenly startled up straight. "Mother! I've got to tell her now! Mother—she's (Continued on page 131)

SHE peered over the edge. "Do you mean to say my husband asked you to push me over that cliff?" The man shuddered. "I was to say you had slipped," he gasped.



*Illustrations by
Gayle Hoskins*

*But it was something else that
slipped, in—*

Just *One* Thing More

by GOUVERNEUR MORRIS

DURING the rough and difficult if not dangerous drive Broderick had several times laughed aloud. To his wife's perfunctory efforts to share in the causes of his amusement he had at first returned evasive or, perhaps, merely indolent replies. But at the summit where they halted for a cocktail out of the big thermos bottle, and a sandwich, he became more communicative.

"It was seeing that name on the letter box," he explained, "that tickles me. I knew McKee—John Miles McKee—when we were boys together. And the last time I saw him, half a dozen years ago, he swore that neither I, nor anybody who'd ever known him would ever see him, or hear of him again. Not that anybody would want to much! But seeing his name on that letter box way off in these mountains—well, it just sort of tickled me.

"Life's queer. McKee wanted to hide off by himself, and along I come, thinking of anything and anybody but him, and we boil over near a young grove of letter boxes, and while the motor's coolin', I have a look at the names on the boxes and see his. It will be a lark when I step up to him and say, 'I just happened to be passing, John, and I thought you'd take it kindly if I fetched along your mail.' He'll just about drop dead, John will!"

"Will he be glad to see you?" inquired Mrs. Broderick, her voice pathetically less listless by the strength of the cocktail which she had taken in slow sips.

"That," said her husband, "remains to be seen. But he'll be glad to get his mail!"

He pulled from his pocket a thin magazine, badly printed on wretched paper, and addressed by a printed slip to Mr. J. Miles McKee, Kingham, California, R. F. D.

"The Bee Keepers' Friend," he read, "A magazine of up to date methods," and he added: "John was always nuts on bees, and I suppose he's taken to keeping them. He was the wonder of us boys in that way. He could go hot up to a swarm of wild bees and shovel 'em off into a box with his bare hands, same as if they'd been blackberries. I reckon this inviting periodical is about all the mail he gets."

The cocktail which she had drunk had by now had its full effect on Mrs. Broderick. There were traces of color in her tired face, and a certain vivacity in her eyes. The keen air, too, of the high Sierras was stimulating, and for the first time in many dreary and colorless months life seemed to her a little better worth living than not. And the case of McKee interested her.

"What did he do," she asked, "that made him say no one would ever see or hear of him again, and drove him to hide himself a hundred miles from anywhere?"

"How would I know?" asked Broderick carelessly. "Perhaps he'll tell you, if you ask him. But I doubt it. He used to be queer, and he's probably queer still."

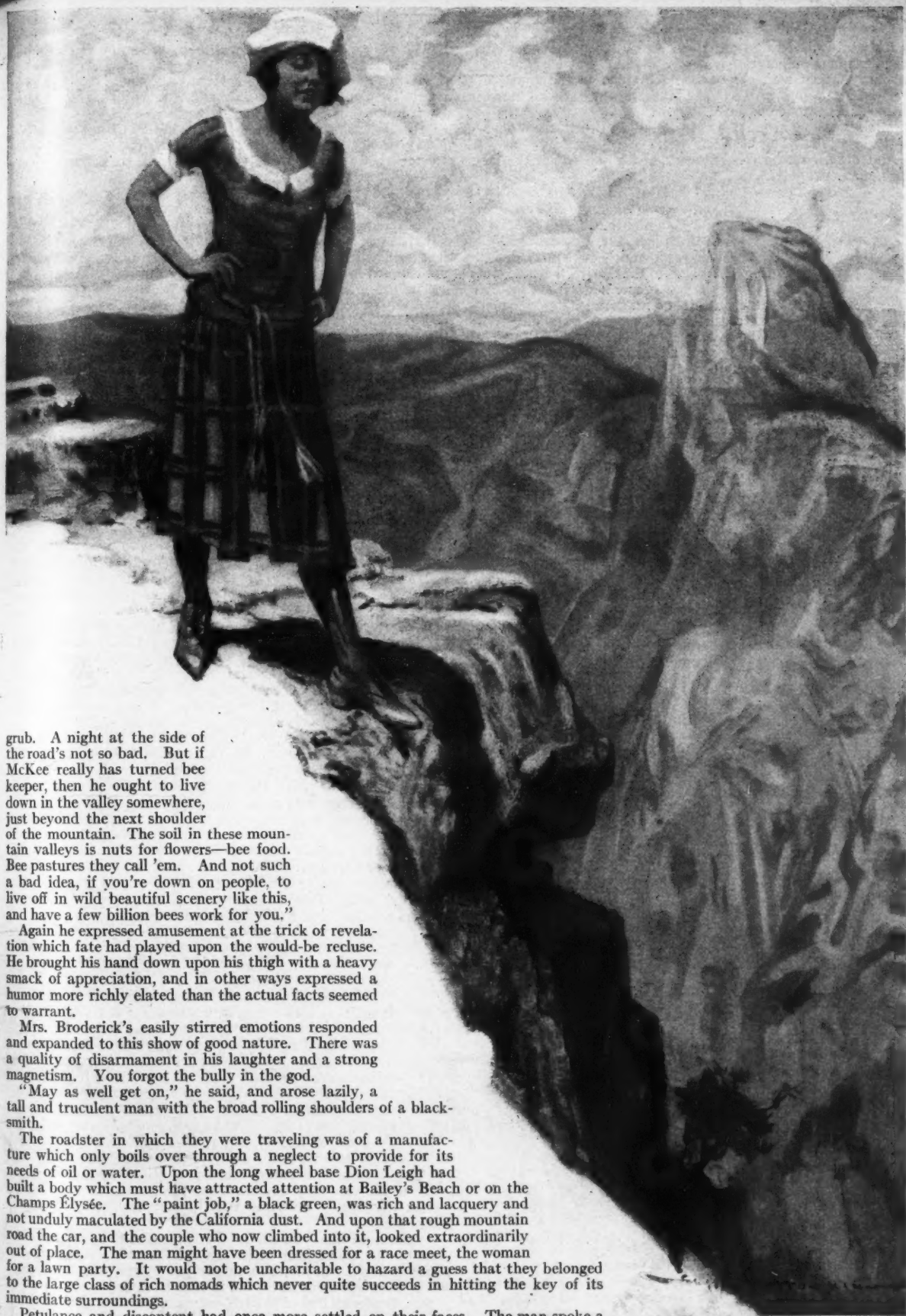
Again Broderick laughed with sudden mirth.

"It certainly does beat the Dutch," he said, "me tumbling onto him like this."

"Do you think it's much farther?"

"It doesn't matter. We've got the pup-tent and plenty of

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grub. A night at the side of the road's not so bad. But if McKee really has turned bee keeper, then he ought to live down in the valley somewhere, just beyond the next shoulder of the mountain. The soil in these mountain valleys is nuts for flowers—bee food. Bee pastures they call 'em. And not such a bad idea, if you're down on people, to live off in wild beautiful scenery like this, and have a few billion bees work for you."

Again he expressed amusement at the trick of revelation which fate had played upon the would-be recluse. He brought his hand down upon his thigh with a heavy smack of appreciation, and in other ways expressed a humor more richly elated than the actual facts seemed to warrant.

Mrs. Broderick's easily stirred emotions responded and expanded to this show of good nature. There was a quality of disarmament in his laughter and a strong magnetism. You forgot the bully in the god.

"May as well get on," he said, and arose lazily, a tall and truculent man with the broad rolling shoulders of a blacksmith.

The roadster in which they were traveling was of a manufacture which only boils over through a neglect to provide for its needs of oil or water. Upon the long wheel base Dion Leigh had built a body which must have attracted attention at Bailey's Beach or on the Champs Elysée. The "paint job," a black green, was rich and lacquered and not unduly maculated by the California dust. And upon that rough mountain road the car, and the couple who now climbed into it, looked extraordinarily out of place. The man might have been dressed for a race meet, the woman for a lawn party. It would not be uncharitable to hazard a guess that they belonged to the large class of rich nomads which never quite succeeds in hitting the key of its immediate surroundings.

Petulance and discontent had once more settled on their faces. The man spoke a rough word, which was perhaps an imperative demand for more elbow room, and the woman without protest slid as far away as possible from the driver's seat. The car moved

Just One Thing More

quickly forward, and from that moment until half an hour later, when from an eminence they perceived, far off and below them, a shanty, green with climbers, which stood in the midst of a well-ordered colony of white bee hives, no word passed between them. Then Broderick spoke.

"Below us and on the right," he said, "we behold the residence of the late John Miles McKee."

And once more he laughed with an elation which the facts did not seem to warrant.

"Why 'the late'?" asked Mrs. Broderick. "If you see any difference between living alone in a hole like that," said Broderick, "and rotting in a grave, I don't."

A long and much twisting descent brought them to the floor of the valley into which the bee keeper had withdrawn from the outside world. And a few moments later the car had come to a stand opposite the shanty itself. The little house and the valley were all in deep shadow. Only the mountain tops were still in sunlight.

A honk of the horn brought the bee man to the door of his house. He was a slight man, deeply tanned, his cheeks and chin rough with beard stubble.

Upon perceiving Broderick, the bee man made a faint upward gesture with his hands. It might have been an indication of either despair or resignation. His eyebrows rose, and for a moment his forehead became a mass of fine horizontal lines. Once more he made the nondescript gesture with his hands. The lines across his forehead vanished and he came hurriedly forward.

"Glad to see you, John," said Broderick. "We just happened to be passing, and we took the liberty of bringing you your mail. Meet Mrs. Broderick.

Mrs. Broderick, shake hands with Mr. McKee."

The bee man bowed his head to Mrs. Broderick and accepted from her husband's hands his solitary piece of mail.

He stood fingering "The Bee Keepers' Friend," painfully ill at ease. Then, murmuring that he had not much to offer, he invited them into his house.

"We'll do more than come in, old man," said Broderick with a loud joviality from which the recluse shrank. "We'll stop for the night, if it's all the same to you. Seeing there's no other place we can get to with night falling."

"Oh, but we have the tent!" objected Mrs. Broderick. "We mustn't put poor Mr. McKee to any inconvenience."

McKee murmured words that were unintelligible.

"He says," interrupted Broderick calmly, "that whatever he has, such as it is, and however humble and unlike what we are accustomed to, it's ours. Am I right?"

The bee man nodded.

"Yes. Of course," he said.

A path had been tramped from the roadside to the doorway of McKee's house. It was bordered by bee hives, and it was not without nervous tremors that Mrs. Broderick passed between them. But the bee day had ended, and there was no activity among the hives.

Broderick, masterful and truculent, was not without tremors himself. But it was his pose to seem afraid of nothing and to banter with danger.

"Do they bite?" he asked with a laugh.

"They don't bite me," said the bee man quietly, and he stood aside so that his guests could precede him into the house.

II

BRODERICK had said that they would "be on their way at the crack of dawn," but an hour after a late breakfast of coffee and eggs and bread and honey, the roadster was still pulled out at the side of the road, and McKee's guests had said nothing about starting.

For once Mrs. Broderick had slept a night through. It was years since she had slept so well. She would like nothing better than to spend a month in just such a place. She supposed that she would get used to the idea of having bees about. Didn't they ever sting the chickens? When you kept taking their honey away from them, why did they bother to keep on making it? Were the nights always so cool and tranquil and wonderful?

McKee, clean-shaven now, answered Mrs. Broderick's questions, wise or foolish, with a kind of eager and deferential gentleness. For her husband, however, he had a way of speaking that was altogether different. He was very terse with him and to the point, but it seemed always as if behind his simple phrases lurked some hidden and deeper meaning. He made a little the effect of some weak and defenseless creature which nevertheless seeks to defend itself. Behind what Broderick said in natural and open comment or interrogation there seemed also to be other and more portentous meanings. And when at last he pulled himself to his feet, and lazily signified the wish to have a word or two with McKee outside, Mrs. Broderick was not surprised.

And it seemed to her, now that she thought it over, that in Broderick's shout of laughter at discovering McKee's name on the letter box there had been more of triumph than amusement.

They passed out of the house, McKee with an obvious reluctance, into a bright sunlight and a fine dry busy humming of bees. But they went no farther than the car, as Mrs. Broderick occasionally noted through a window, and they leaned against this for a long time and talked in low voices. From their attitudes it seemed to Mrs. Broderick that she was watching a pantomime in which a burly ruffian of a man sought to override and sweep from his path the opposition of a man slender to the point of fragility, but stubbornly if timidly tenacious of his own views.

The contrary, however, seemed to have been the case, for when the men returned to the house, it was Broderick who loudly answered that he had been worsted in an argument.

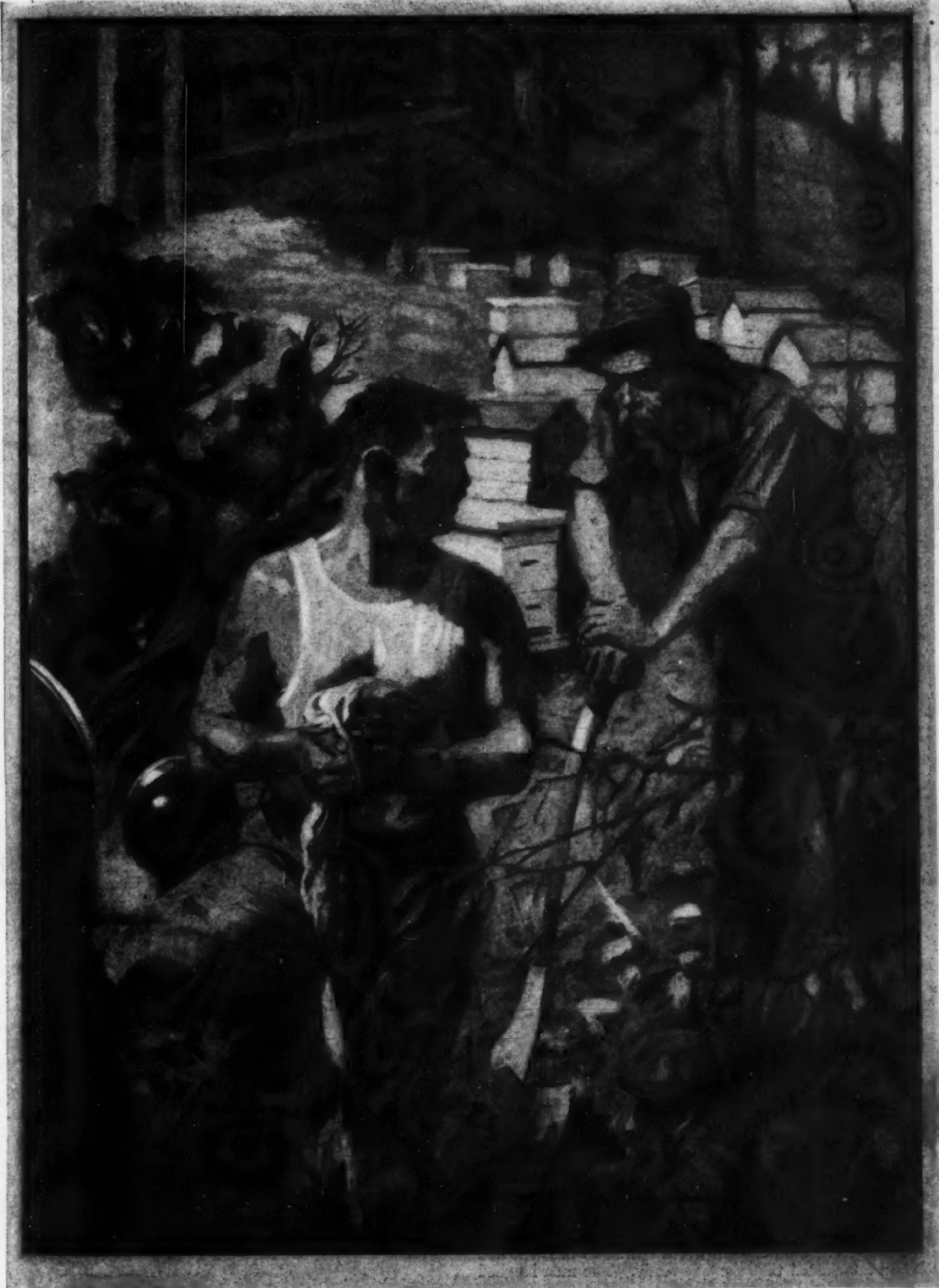
"I've told him," he said, "that we ought to be on our way now, but he won't hear of it. Says he hasn't seen a human being in weeks. Says we've simply got to stay another night. We've been like meat and drink to him, he says."

Mrs. Broderick looked to McKee for confirmation of this pressing invitation. He was white under his tan, and his eyes had a scared look in them, but he nodded, and said quietly:

"You will stay a little longer, won't you?"

And there on the letter box was the name—John Miles McKee. Broderick smiled sardonically.





"Well," asked Broderick, "where is she?" "That's not for us to know," hinted McKee.

In almost all decisions Broderick's whims were the law of their married life. And she said:

"Surely. If you really want us."

"Well," said Broderick, "that's settled, and now what are you folks going to do? The car got *some* wrenching yesterday, and I'm going to lie under her for an hour or so and go over the bolts. That'll keep me quiet and out of mischief and I'll need the rest of the day to clean the grease off me."

Mrs. Broderick smiled at McKee.

"What," she asked, "would you be doing if you didn't have us on your hands?"

"I might work among the bees," he said.

Mrs. Broderick laughed the suggestion away.

"That," she said, "wouldn't interest me at all."

"Not even if I gave you gloves and a veil?"

She shook her head.

"Then," said McKee, "that's out. When I don't work with the bees, I usually take a pan and wash out a little gold. That's



Broderick, masterful and truculent, was not without tremors himself, but he laughed loudly. "Do those bees

how I make my living, really. There's only a few dollars a day in my dirt, but if you've never seen the process it's interesting, and even exciting. It's not far to walk."

"Oh, but I'm a splendid walker!" she insisted. "I love to walk."

"Better show her that view you told me of," said Broderick. "She's a good walker, and she's got a sure enough head for heights."

"I'm never dizzy," boasted Mrs. Broderick. "I can walk right out to the edge of cliffs and look over."

"She ought to have been a Rocky Mountain goat," said Broderick.

"Well," Mrs. Broderick jumped to her feet, "let's go."

But they did not go at once. The two minutes which she required to change into a sport suit and shoes so multiplied and increased that it was nearly noon when she burst in suddenly upon the men from the bedroom which she and Broderick had shared, and announced that she was ready. The men laughed at her, Broderick boisterously and McKee timidly.

She and McKee, Broderick stated, had better not start on their expedition until after supper—very well then *lunch*. He stood corrected. That would be better all around. They wouldn't have to hurry back. He himself preferred to lie under a car on a full stomach and tighten bolts. What was McKee going to give them for lunch? Fried chicken? Hip-hooray! In that case he himself would shake up a cocktail. It would taste rotten without ice, but he would personally guarantee the kick.

It was nearly two when they got started, and they only made a pretense at washing for gold.

McKee showed her how the trick was done, and he showed her

in the bottom of the pan glittering particles of gold which he assured her were worth at least half a dollar, and he even tried to teach her the art. But she had a mind that wandered easily and soon lost interest.

Muddy water wasn't very interesting, was it? Even if you did find a few cents' worth of gold at the bottom. The flowers and the trees were worth all the gold in the world anyway, weren't they? What was the wonderful view he had promised to show her?

"It isn't so very wonderful," he deprecated. "You mustn't expect too much. You climb about a thousand feet, and then you stand on the edge of nothing, and look off ever so far, between two mountain peaks or down on the floor of the valley, with nothing but air between you and it. If you aren't used to heights it's a sensation."

III

MRS. BRODERICK made good her boasts. She climbed quickly and nimbly, and then she stepped boldly out to the very edge of nothing and looked out and down.

She remained thus a long time, a slender and engaging figure in her short gray skirt flecked with scarlet, and a silk sweater to match. She made a remark, and she flung a question over her shoulder, but got no answer. Then she turned, with a laugh, to see what had become of McKee.

He was sitting, well withdrawn from the edge of the cliff. He was white as death, and his eyes were closed. With a lit sound of dismay she stepped quickly to him, and knelt on her knee.



bite?" he asked. "They don't bite me," said the bee man quietly.

"What is the matter?" she asked, and touched his shoulder. "Are you sick?"

He opened his eyes at that—wild, dismayed, sick eyes—and caught at her hand with both his. A sort of convulsion, as of incipient nausea, passed through him.

Then he said, "I'll be all right. Just let me hold on to your hand, and I'll be all right."

But he was not. His head rolled suddenly forward and he collapsed in a dead faint.

Mrs. Broderick screamed, but there was no one to hear her. Then she took his head in her lap and wildly fanned his face with her hands. It is doubtful if this brought him to. But his eyes opened presently and he looked up at her. After a little he turned his face away so that she could no longer see it, his shoulders shook and—she saw him through a first class fit of hysterics.

When he had stopped laughing and crying, she began to shake him and scold him. Then she wheedled and coaxed, and babied him, for somehow he had managed to make a brutal assault on the mother instinct in her. Finally he began to talk and to explain. But at first his words and phrases were so jumbled and exclamatory as to be almost without meaning. Then a sort of fatal calm came over the man and he said:

"It's too much for me. It's too much for me. And I don't know what to do. I don't see any way out. With a man like that, there isn't any way out. Not for you, nor for me. What's the good of me going back and saying it's done if it isn't done? He'd want to see for himself. He'd make me take him to the foot of the cliff, and then he'd know that I was lying. And it doesn't matter about me, but *you* couldn't get away from him. He'd find you . . ."

"Now, Mr. McKee," said Mrs. Broderick, "I don't know what you are talking about. Won't you please try to be sensible? How can I give you advice and help you to think what you ought to do, if I don't know what's the matter? Is *he* my husband?"

"Listen," said McKee. "When you stood on the edge out there—at first—I was right behind you. Suppose I'd put my hand between your shoulders, and given you just a little push. You'd have gone over, wouldn't you?"

Mrs. Broderick nodded gravely, and said:

"Very probably."

Then, and in different circumstances it might have seemed incredible, she suddenly began to snuffle and whimper.

Manliness returned to McKee. He put his arm around her, and comforted her.

"It's all right now," he said. "He wanted me to do it, and I said I'd do it. But I didn't do it."

"He's tried every way he could think of to get rid of me," said Mrs. Broderick. "But—"

"Why have you hung on to him? Do you love him?"

"I've hung on to him for the sake of other women. That's why. He can have my money and welcome. He's had most of it. But I didn't think he'd—"

"He needs money," said McKee. "Lots of money."

The trust that ends with your death—short of a will to the contrary it would go to him out and out. It's the money. It isn't the other woman so much. But he'd have her too, and that counts with him."

"And he asked you to—to push me over the cliff! Why should you? Why do you have to do what he says?"

"I'll tell you even that," said McKee. "We're in this thing together up to our necks, and you'd better know. I stole some money when he and I were kids together. He bullied me into doing it. I was weak and afraid of him. He made me do it and he fixed it so's he could prove that I'd done it."

McKee shrugged his shoulders.

"After that, whenever he wanted a dirty job done, he'd come to me, and he'd say if I wouldn't do it, he'd turn me over to the police. So I did dirty jobs for him—one after another—each one worse than the last. If he told what he knew about me and gave his proofs I'd be sent to prison—for always."

"There's no real bad in me, Mrs. Broderick—and look what he's brought me to. The gold that I wash out in the creek—it all goes to pay back what I've taken. I've washed a small fortune out of that creek. If I'd been bad I'd have kept it for myself, wouldn't I? But all these years I've been paying back—paying back. I couldn't have done it, but for the two pockets—I've found two rich pockets—really rich—and there may be others. What's the good!"

"Six years ago I ran away and came here to hide—to hide from him—to live close to nature, and think clean, decent thoughts, and undo all the harm I'd done. And now he finds me, and wants me to do just one dirty little job more, and that'll be the end. If I'll just oblige him once more, he'll never come near me again. We go walking, you and I, and you slip and fall over a cliff. And

Just One Thing More

he goes half crazy with grief, and gives what's left of you a grand funeral, and wears mourning for you and inherits all your money and marries the other woman. Right now he's waiting for me to come back and tell him all about the accident!"

"Well," said Mrs. Broderick, "there's no denying that you haven't shown much backbone in your relations with my husband. The dirty dog!"

She leapt lightly to her feet and stepped once more to the edge of the cliff and looked down.

She returned then to where McKee sat.

"I did that," she said, "to harden my heart against him. How deep is that drop? A thousand feet?"

McKee nodded.

"It's too bad," she said, "that you are limited to good impulses. It's a pity that you aren't a real man."

Her scorn stung him like a whip.

"Well," she snapped, "what are you going to do about it?"

McKee shook his head in helpless negation of any plan. He did not know what to do.

A clump of hairbells spurted from a pocket of soil near the edge of the cliff. From the depths upon a long resonant spiral of flight rose a honey bee. The bee chose a hairbell without an instant's hesitation and plunged into it head first. The flower seemed then to have come to life. It shook and struggled.

McKee stiffened and his eyes shone. And he leapt lightly to his feet.

"Can you find your way back to the house?" he asked.

"Of course."

"Give me quarter of an hour's start and then follow. But don't come out of the bushes at the edge of the clearing until I call you."

"What are you going to do?"

"I'll not tell you that. Then you can say truthfully, if anyone should ever ask you, that you didn't know."

She studied his face for a moment and saw that it was full of hope and courage.

"I'm sorry," she said, "for saying that you weren't a real man. I judged you wrong."

She held out her hand and he clasped it and lifted it suddenly to his lips.

"Things don't always work out the way they're meant to—but you'll be all right whatever happens."

For a long time after he had scurried off down the mountain side she stood looking at the hand he had kissed.

IV

It was an earnest of Broderick's general callousness that he should actually have been spending the time under the car tightening the bolts. To see the human mechanism in disorder was nothing to him; but he had a genuine and sympathetic feeling for any kind of machinery which had no feeling of its own.

At McKee's approach he crawled out from under the car, and began methodically to wipe his hands upon a bunch of cotton waste. He had stripped to his sleeveless undershirt and his trousers, and looked as if he had just stepped from the hot room of a Turkish bath. The sweat came out of him in great beads, the beads swelled and broke and ran. His magnificent system of arm and shoulder muscles gleamed in the sunlight.

The two men looked at each other for some moments in silence.

The pan of McKee's gold washing operations was under his arm, the shovel and the pick were over his shoulder. He put down the shovel and the pan and stood leaning on the pick. Broderick broke the silence.

"Well," he said, "where is she?"

"That's not for us to know," said McKee quietly. "You've had the whip hand of me for years. I did a little wrong and because you knew of it, you forced me to do a bigger wrong. And so on—until there was nothing bigger left for me to do but one thing—murder."

A sardonic smile twisted Broderick's mouth out of shape.

"You say that she lost her balance and fell!" he exclaimed. "My God!"

There was elation in his eyes; but this was not pure and unadulterated. There was fear in his eyes as well.

"When did it happen?" he asked.

"We'd better get a blanket to carry the body in," said McKee and he turned and moved quickly toward the house. Broderick followed slowly. Half-way to the house McKee faced suddenly about.

"You drove me," he said, "and you drove me until at last there was nothing left but murder. So be it."

Therewith he swung up his pickax and brought it down with a crash upon the top of the nearest hive. The pine of which this was made, dried tinder—dry by long exposure to the California sun—burst and split and broke and splintered. And from their wrecked civilization infuriate bees spouted, bent on reprisals and revenge.

As the smell of flowers might have drawn them in another mood, so now they were drawn by the smell of Broderick's sweating body. And in a moment of time the merciless man was screaming like a child.

Again and again the pickax crashed, and two hundred thousand bees roared forth to the battle.

White and shaking and sick McKee staggered across the clearing calling to Mrs. Broderick as he went.

"Don't come out yet," he called. "It isn't safe to come out. Where are you?"

She answered presently and he changed his direction a little and in a few moments had found her.

"Your husband," he said, "has met with a terrible accident."

He was all winded as if he had run a long way. There was a long silence.

"How," said she, "did you know they wouldn't sting you?"

"You saw what happened?"

She nodded.

"You are a brave man, McKee."

He shook his head.

"Bees like me," he said simply. "And I hoped they wouldn't hurt me."

Her hand sought his and she pressed it.

"We must wait here until dark," he said, "until they have quieted down. Poor things, they've got their little cities to build up all over again from the beginning."

"But," said the woman, "you couldn't know that they wouldn't hurt you."

"Nothing is sure," he said.

"Two things are."

"What?"

A pair of eyes rich with feeling sought his.

"Admiration and gratitude."

"It was murder," said McKee, "and he drove me to it."

Several times McKee sallied forth and went near the hives. Finally he judged that it was safe to leave the shelter of the woods.

"Promise not to look at him," he said.

How dry is the United States?

ONLY the rich or the very well to do in America are drinking, according to William G. Shepherd, whose first article on "Who's Drinking in America?" appears on the opposite page.

Two sets of Englishmen who have come to America have proved this fact.

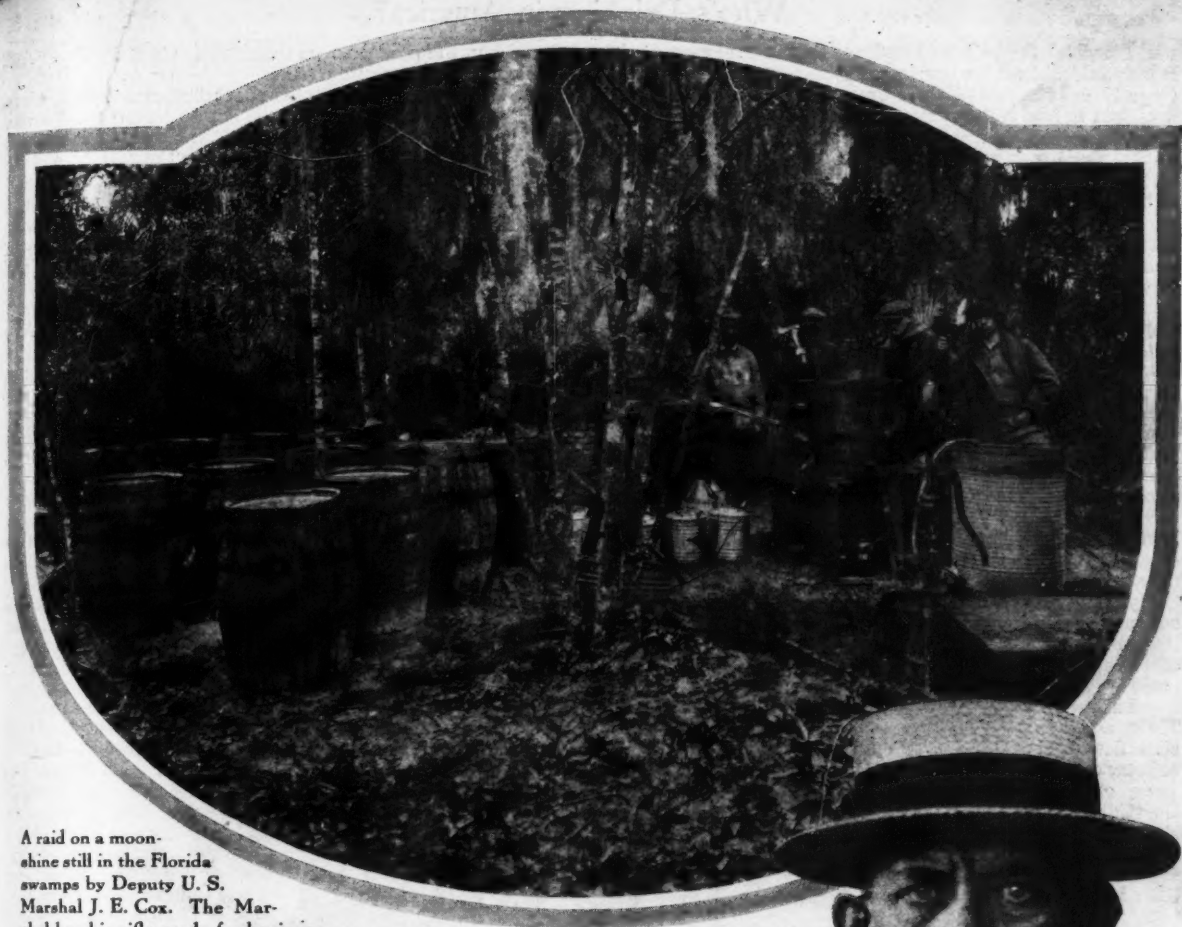
Lord Northcliffe, the British newspaper and magazine publisher, who spent his time while here in the homes of the rich, said, "Show me Prohibition in the United States, and I will tell you what I think of it."

As a matter of fact, it is very probable that Lord Northcliffe—who doesn't favor Prohibition in England—did not take one illegal drink in the United States. He had recourse to the vast cellar supplies of the rich, laid in before the United States went dry.

Two labor members of Parliament—J. E. Davison and C. H. Stinch—who came to the United States to investigate Prohibition, reported that they found the United States saloonless and dry, so far as average citizens were concerned.

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A raid on a moonshine still in the Florida swamps by Deputy U. S. Marshal J. E. Cox. The Marshal has his rifle ready for business.

Who's Drinking in America?

And When Are We Going to Stop?

The first of a series of articles by WILLIAM G. SHEPHERD, in which he vividly tells the real story—and, more than that, the romance—of Prohibition enforcement in the United States



"I don't believe there's a grove of trees in Florida without a still in it," said Marshal Cox.

WHY don't we have Prohibition in the United States? The alcohol tide is suddenly rising. After a period of some months, in which arrests for drunkenness fell off in the entire country, we now see counties and States that had been dry for decades turning as wet as the rest of the country. After a time during which crime, insanity, poverty and the ills of alcohol-drinking fell to a minimum we see these devils again begin to stalk our land. In almost every city, town and village in the United States today alcoholic liquor is to be obtained. A majority of Americans have voted to have these things ended. But they are not ended.

What has happened? You, Mr. Citizen, in three-fourths of the States of the Union, who voted dry long before Federal Prohibition went into effect, are asking this question. Your wife is asking it. Your neighbors are asking it. In the great wet cities, even the men who are delighted but astonished at the revival of drinking and the sudden drop in the cost of whisky are

asking it. What has happened?

I have been asked by the editors of COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE to find out what has happened; to discover, if possible, what is the matter. The search has brought to light facts that are almost incredible—law-breaking such as neither the United States nor any other country, except in time of revolution, has ever seen before. It has uncovered a world of romance, of underworld crime, of wholesale murder, of sudden wealth. It has revealed, as existing in the United States, a world that is separate from the law, separate from the rest of us—a secret world that is a law unto itself.

No lodge, no secret order, was ever so successful, so widely spread or so richly repaid as are the citizens of this little secret body that exists to secure for Americans their daily drink. It is a

Who's Drinking in America?

world in which the might of murder or the power of money rules. It is a world without the law; its members never call on the courts for justice. It exists as if there were no law. Though this world lives jowl to jowl with average American citizens, they know no more of it than they do of the other world in which the Marconi machines are constantly roaring and sending their waves even through our unknowing bodies. In this world is romance such as befitted the time of no-law in feudal days. Pirates are again on the seas in American waters, murdering and stealing rich booty. Plundering bands, faring forth in automobiles instead of on horses, raid the castles and warehouses of the lords who rule in this secret world; and even, at times, empty the storehouses of the Government itself. By automobile, by railroad, by boat and by airplane these members of the secret world carry on their activities. A glimpse into their world shows conditions such as, perhaps, have never before existed in a modern state.

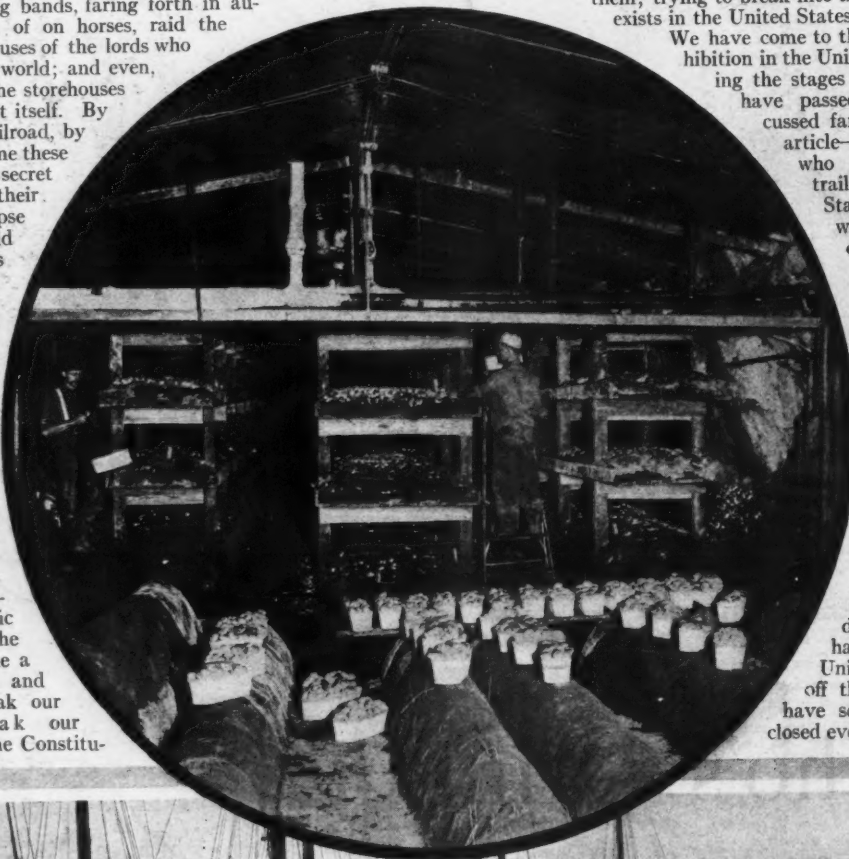
My investigations show that the men of this secret world are working all about us. Their automobiles flash past us in the country roads or stand alongside us in the blocks of city traffic. Their traffic routes cover the United States like a net. They steal and murder and break our laws—they break our amendment to the Constitu-

tion of our United States—a thousand times every day. And their boldness is increasing.

The stories that I have to tell about them are stories such as have never been told before. Some day such stories will have a place in American literature and American history like the stories of the baron raiders in the feudal days or the wild tales of the Cossacks that fill Russian literature. And there are stories, too, of incredibly brave Government officials, fighting against odds of a thousand to one with whole communities apparently against them; trying to break into the secret world that exists in the United States and demolish it.

We have come to the last test of Prohibition in the United States. Studying the stages through which we have passed—these are discussed farther along in this article—any investigator who follows the liquor trail through the United States today as I have, who feels public opinion, and then dips into the boot-legger's world to converse with its hardy, daredevil, but richly repaid members, must realize that, unless there is shortly a change of sentiment in the United States, Prohibition is done for.

Our Prohibition laws are creaking like strained bridges under the weight we have put on them. The United States is falling off the water wagon. I have seen this fact disclosed everywhere.



(Above) Brewery vaults now used for growing mushrooms. (Below) Captured vessels of rum runners. Boats like these supply Palm Beach and points North with everything from whisky to champagne and cognac.



This still was found in the attic of a Florida boarding house—while down on the porch the unsuspecting tourists were playing checkers and sitting peacefully in the sun.

I had never believed the stories that the Gulf Stream has a clear-cut edge, and that, to a fraction of a foot, you could see where its clear, blue, warm waters left off and the dark, green shore waters began.

"I'll show you," said the guide who was running the launch. "We'll come to the Gulf Stream about two miles out, and I'll run this launch along the edge of it."

I fished from the back end of the launch while the little boat rolled in the heavy offshore breakers. Soon Palm Beach was almost out of sight, some six miles behind us.

"Look ahead!" said the guide. I turned, and there, a quarter of a mile away, the ocean was blue. Soon we had come to the "edge." In one roll our little launch passed over into the blue water.

In another roll it wallowed back into the green. The guide

turned the boat along the margin of the Gulf

Stream so that at one

minute my bait, floating 200 feet

behind us, was lost to sight in

the green

water, and

the next minute

flashed

out, white

and clear, in

the clean

Gulf Stream

waters.

"The old

Gulf Stream!"

I said medita-

tively.

"The old Gulp

Stream, you mean,"

said the guide.

"What?" I asked.

"Gulp Stream! Gulp Stream!

G-u-l-p, gulp!" said the guide. "We've

changed the name down here in Florida."

"Why?" I asked.



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Roy A. Haynes of Hillsboro, Ohio, new Prohibition Commissioner—the first National Prohibition officer. Commissioner Haynes is forty years old and has been an active newspaperman.



© HARRIS & SWING

No alcohol gets by Uncle Sam's laboratory.

"Well, where would you fellows in New York and the rest of the East get your drinks if it wasn't for this Stream?" he asked. "The liquor ships all run up this Stream from the Bahamas and Cuba, to bring you your drinks." (Continued on page 123)

Illustrations by
William
Meade
Prince

He was just beginning to wonder what he had better do when the door opened and Lady Queenie Paulle came in. She was a lovely object, but her eye was hard. "I sha'n't attempt to kiss you," she announced.



THE FISH

Every one of us knows a Fish. And all Fish are brothers—or sisters—under their skins. Which is one reason why you will enjoy this story.

REGINALD SARK was sitting with several other members of the theatrical profession in the waiting room of Mr. Cutter's celebrated agency—a shabby and dark chamber which might well have been called the chamber of hope deferred. In common with the bulk of Mr. Cutter's humbler clients who were professionally "resting," Reginald Sark looked in at the office in Chandos Street almost every day, for fear that if he didn't he might miss something good. He was a man appreciably less than thirty, fair, ingenuous in expression, and carefully dressed in the breezy manner, with special attention to collar, necktie, and pin, and perhaps not quite enough to boots.

The great, fat Cutter himself invaded the room, and the conversations about horse racing and frocks and the fictions about

salaries instantly ceased, as hopes deferred irrepressibly pushed forth again in the vitalizing presence of the old gentleman. Mr. Cutter's eye happened to fall upon Reginald Sark.

"Hullo, Reggie!" said he, "I was just thinking of writing to you." This statement was untrue, but of course Reginald believed it. And also Reginald loved to be called Reggie, because for him Reggie had an aristocratic, clubmannish sound, and it was in order to be addressed as Reggie that he had given himself the name of Reginald, which was not his own. Sark was authentic enough. He was justly proud of Sark, and on the basis of a jocular remark by an acquaintance he had gradually built up a legend that his family had left the Channel Islands for England in the eighteenth century; he now believed the legend.

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by Arnold Bennett

*the distinguished author of "Sacred and Profane Love,"
"Buried Alive," "The Old Wives' Tale," "Clayhanger,"
"Hilda Lessways," "The Pretty Lady," and other books.*

He rose eagerly at Mr. Cutter's inspiring words and in a moment saw himself playing a good part at a good salary in a five-hundred night success. In another moment he had ordered new suits at a tailor's in Conduit Street and bought himself a gold cigarette case.

"Come out here, there's a good fellow," said Mr. Cutter, pointing to the staircase. "You don't mind, do you?"

"Certainly," agreed Reginald with enthusiasm, charmed, as were other clients, by Mr. Cutter's amiable style.

On the dim little landing Mr. Cutter said, very confidentially:

"There's a walk-on at the Princess. It's not much, but it might lead to more. Miss Flyfax's season. Sure winner, I'm told. If you think anything of it run off there at once. But leave

the salary to me to settle. Cecil Frank's the man to see. I'll telephone him you're on the way."

Urged onwards by a friendly pat on the back, Reginald swept down the stairs. His scheme for the gold cigarette case was somewhat dashed, but with the healthy instinct of the born optimist he fastened on the magic words, "might lead to more."

In spite of Reginald's ingratiating tones, the fat and inimical stage doorkeeper of the Princess would not accept without confirmation Reginald's formula, "Business appointment with Mr. Frank," and he sent a boy to make sure that Reginald was not bluffing. He had been hoodwinked by plausible Reginalds too often.

"You can go up, sir," said he gloomily when the boy returned;

and Reginald went up with haughty dignity—not too haughty, however, for if he got the job he would necessarily be in permanent relations with the powerful stage doorkeeper, and stage doorkeepers are kittle cattle.

He stood nervously in the wings. A gentleman whom Reginald took to be Mr. Cecil Frank was leaning over a rickety table at which was seated another gentleman. The two were discussing lines in the play seemingly in rehearsal, and Mr. Cecil Frank was scoring the script with a blue pencil. Various ladies and gentlemen strolled to and fro, or stood still, and their deportment and facial expression showed that they were thoroughly accustomed to unforeseen delays. Reginald glanced over the edge of the stage into the twilight of the shrouded auditorium, and thought what a magnificent auditorium it would be to act in. He pictured it glittering with electricity and packed from stalls to gallery by a delirious audience.

Then he noticed two women talking together in the little niche with a desk where the assistant stage manager was lord. One of them was dark and the other was fair; and both were superb in dress, in gesture, and in unconscious natural haughtiness. Reginald had just attempted haughtiness; he now saw the real thing, and perceived that the next time he tried after it he could and must do better. These women obviously had the world at their feet, and would think no more of a gold cigarette case than of a paper packet of golden Food Flakes.



The dark one was without doubt Emily Flyfax, the great star of both comedy and tragedy, commonly referred to as Em in the profession. Reginald had not seen her act for years—he had immense difficulty, on account of his obscurity, in obtaining complimentary tickets at really high class theaters—but he recognized her partly from a vague resemblance to her former self, and partly from a still more vague resemblance to her recent photographs.

It next occurred to the startled Reginald that the two illustrious women of the world were discussing himself. With smiling vivacity they were doing so quite openly, as though he were far away and could not see them. Reginald blushed, and surreptitiously examined his person as well as he could, fearing that something might be wrong. Not that these illustrious women were contemptuous or even subtly satiric. No! Though unquestionably free in their vivacity, they had a benevolent air towards him. The next event in Reginald's life was that Emily

Flyfax strolled forward with the grand free movement of the limbs characteristic of her, and accosted him:

"Who are you?" she asked, curious, kind, careless. "You're intriguing us dreadfully." She had a thrilling voice, an exquisite enunciation. She was as tall as Reginald.

"I'm Reginald Sark," he replied, confused.

"Oh, of course!" said Emily Flyfax, vaguely. "How stupid of me!"

Did she, then, know of him? Or was she being very negligently polite? One part of Reginald's mind knew that Miss Flyfax did not know him and could not possibly have recognized him; but, strangely, another part of Reginald's mind accepted her negligent politeness as the truth, and Reginald hugged himself because the great Em had recognized him and knew of him. Amazing moment!

Miss Flyfax stood close to him. She was excitingly perfumed. She was fashionably dressed in black, with a marvelous hat. She wore some astounding jewelry, and had a general aspect of extreme yet not strident expensiveness. But what overpowered Reginald more than these things was the sensation which he had of a personality extremely powerful and extremely feminine. It was the rich voice, the full lips, the flashing eyes, the curves of the cheek and bosom; but it was more even than these—it was something mysterious. He was attracted and afraid. He was simply naught in her presence.

"Are you playing in this new show?" she asked again. "I forget. I never can remember the cast of any play I'm in till after the hundredth night." She laughed humorously, but also as it seemed in self-mockery. And all the time she was examining him.

Reginald explained his presence.

"Oh! But I think you'd do splendidly for the distinguished guest who is too noble to open his mug at my party in the second act. You look it perfectly. Of course I never, never interfere with dear Mr. Frank, but I'll speak to him. By the way, have you done much understudying?"

Reginald recounted in fine, general terms his career. The phraseology of this recital had become fixed, like that of a beadle showing a church to visitors. He had once played a small part in the West End, and he had understudied five small parts in the West End. (True, three of them were in one play, but he omitted minor details.) His triumphs had been on tour. (To tour in a repertory company was such valuable experience.) He had played in old English comedy on tour. By a strange and happy chance he had some press cuttings in his pocket.

"Very interesting!" murmured Miss Flyfax, glancing at the soiled press cuttings without the slightest pretense of reading them.

The fair woman of the world joined them, moving soundlessly.

Though somewhat flat in contour, she was very beautiful, very expensive, and haughtier even than Em. It appeared to the intimidated Reginald that both were conscious of vast power—mistresses of the earth.

"Oh, Queenie, this is Reginald Sark! Mr. Sark—Lady Queenie Paulle."

At that dazzling name, chief ornament of all popular dailies and weeklies, Reginald trembled. He could not believe that he was in such company. Lady Queenie shook hands. What a style! The two women, still youngish and yet mature in knowledge, seemed to surround him, to envelope him in their disturbing atmosphere. Never had Reginald felt anything like it. He was aware of a whole series of new sensations. Was it possible that they were admiring him? If they were he could not imagine why, for they had not seen him act.

"What do you think of his voice, Queen?" Em asked.

"It's perfectly thrilling, but don't tell him I said so. These handsome creatures get far too much flattery," answered Lady Queenie. "They're like us," she added, gazing squarely at him as she spoke.



The ladies smiled. Reginald blushed again and smiled foolishly. They kept close to him, murmuring vaguely to themselves or to him. Then Emily Flyfax turned round.

"Cecil, you poor, sweet, horrid darling," said she to Mr. Frank, who had left the table. "You know I never interfere, but this time I do think we've found the missing understudy for Jack. And he's ideal for the proud, silent guest. Mr. Reginald Sark. He's played all the big rôles in old English comedy—just the training we wanted, isn't it?"

Reginald wanted to deny that he had played all the big rôles in old English comedy, but Miss Flyfax merely put her ringed hand over his mouth—astonishing gesture! Mr. Cecil Frank answered absently, and shook hands like a dying man; but Reginald felt that he was from that moment engaged. And he was.

"Where do you live, Siegfried?" Miss Flyfax asked afterwards, bending towards him, "because rehearsals in this theater are apt to be a little irregular. They say it's my fault."

"Oh, Bloomsbury, Miss Flyfax. Quite central! Quite central," said Reginald airily.

"Are you on the 'phone?"

"Er—not at the moment."

"How sagacious, how wise you are! Queenie, the dear thing is not on the 'phone. I wouldn't be if I had the courage."

II

REGINALD did live in Bloomsbury, but so near the edge of it that he almost toppled over across Euston Road into a nether region of North London, which he could not possibly have mentioned so airily to Miss Flyfax. He inhabited an enormous mansion, sharing it with many hundred other persons. One of the advantages claimed for this mansion was that it was convenient to the great railway terminals. It certainly was. The huge building had several entrances, and it was honeycombed with numerous flights of stairs and long corridors—all of imperishable, naked, resounding stone, and all very clean. There were no such transient phenomena as lifts in the arcana of the mansion. On every side the explorer was encouraged and bewildered by the images of red hands pointing to painted groups of numbers, the numbers being repeated on one or another of some hundreds of little black doors, each of which doors was a front door and the portal of a castle.

All the castles were like Reginald's castle. It consisted of two rooms so small and so low that you could not imagine them smaller or lower, but cozy and light; together with a dark cell in which a cooking stove and a slopstone were imprisoned for life. The landlord had set to his legion of tenants a prodigious example of economy, in space; and the tenants, helped by the force of circumstances, imitated this economy, in monetary expenditure. The mansion was a place where in every castle every penny counted and had to count.

Having changed his coat and his boots, Reginald sat down to a simple but nourishing meal and narrated the events of the morn-

ing to his wife. Gladiola was a miniature girl, born to live in the castle and fitting it to a nicety. Very dark (darker than Emily Flyfax), neat, spruce, lively, alert and decided, she was perhaps a couple of years older than Reginald. Her mother had kept theatrical lodgings in a Midland town. Reginald had unromantically married his landlady's daughter, who, in addition to being a fair cook and a very efficient manageress, had come into a bit of money. She ruled him, but she saved him from his histrionic temperament and from the whisky and soda fate of the mediocre young actor whose infrequent coins burn holes in his pockets.

"If I were you I should beware of those people," said she cheerfully, when the narration was done. "They're a queer lot."

"Oh! They're all right!" mildly protested Reginald, who was the more shocked by this ruthless judgment on goddesses in that Gladiola had always hailed them in the columns of *The Daily Mirror* with a respectful enthusiasm.

"Have you signed the contract?"

"No. The excellent Cutter is seeing to that, and I shall sign it this afternoon, and I am to

"Well," said Gladiola, "you can kiss me now. I've forgiven you."

watch a rehearsal tonight—it's in the Maiden Lane Lecture Hall. You see, they can't have the stage tonight. I must say I can't in the least make out why they've fastened on me in such a hurry."

This last statement was an exaggeration. Reginald's mind still rang with Lady Queenie's phrase (which he had not recounted to his wife), "these handsome creatures." Was he handsome? He supposed that he must be, though among his adventures he could find nothing to prove the new and agreeable supposition. A glance now and then, perhaps . . .

"I can tell you how it happened," said Gladiola. "When Mr. Cutter telephoned to the theater before you arrived he must have said something special. You may depend upon it they all knew all about you before you got there. Only they're so sly."

In so saying Gladiola in her turn also deceived. Her own private explanation of the affair was quite different, and it coincided with Reginald's own private explanation. She had married Reginald for one sole reason. In her opinion he was the handsomest man she had ever seen. He was her luxury, her madness, her gewgaw, for which she was prepared to risk ruin. She never mentioned his beauty to him, even in those moments of transport when secrets escape from a woman's lips. She would praise his character, his sagacity, and his professional skill, none of which she esteemed. She could not understand how it was that other women—and especially actresses, in whose mentality she was deeply versed—had not perceived his extraordinary beauty. She now comprehended that one woman, if not two, had perceived it, and she grew anxious, defensive and cunning.

"Have you any money left?" she asked him, as he was making himself breezily smart for the second visit to Mr. Cutter.

"About a bob."

"Here's two shillings."

She had the money in her chubby hand mysteriously ready for him. Reginald never knew exactly where she kept the household resources. He took the florin and looked down at her,

somewhat condescendingly, but yet respectfully—for, like the stage doorkeeper, she had power. A commonplace little piece compared with the glorious queens whom he had met and fascinated and whom—dazzling thought!—he would meet and fascinate again that very night. However, he could not do less than kiss her. She was a good and useful little piece, if a tartar upon occasion.

"No!" she cried, flashing her black eyes, and withdrawing her head. "You didn't kiss me when you came in, and so you shan't kiss me now."

"Didn't I?" He was abashed. "If I didn't it was pure forgetfulness."

"That makes it all the worse," said she. "I wouldn't have minded if you'd done it on purpose. I can stand anything except being forgotten."

She ran off, as far as the dimensions of the flat would allow. It was plain to her that when he arrived for lunch he simply did not know what he was doing—so intoxicated was he by the flavor of the outside world. She felt that she had to sober him, to give him something to think about. She succeeded. He was more than abashed; he was frightened. To be courted, as he thought, by queens, and to be flouted by little Gladiola from a petty street in Derby! And she had so cleverly concealed her resentment at his negligence in forgetting to kiss her on arrival, shooting it out finally in the most dramatic and surprising manner!

"Don't be late for Mr. Cutter," said she from the window.

"Oh, all right!" said he, with affected nonchalance.

He had an impulse to rush at her and force a kiss on her, but he restrained it. He would show her that he could be as independent as she. Moreover he considered that she had taken his great news too coldly.

When he returned, at nearly midnight, after a rather disappointing evening, he had qualms about the nature of her reception of him. He entered the castle with care, not a bit like the lord of the castle. The bedroom was dark. Was she in bed and sulking, or sleeping? He opened the door of the tiny living room. The tiny electric light was burning. On the tiny sofa in front of the tiny gas fire sat tiny Gladiola, her hair fixed for the night. Her arms had been pushed anyhow into her yellow dressing gown. She was sewing. She twisted her head round and smiled at him. She did not remark on his lateness, nor ask him about what he had done at the rehearsal. She just provocatively smiled.

"Why!" he exclaimed. "What on earth——"

"I *did* go to bed," she said. "But then I remembered I had this sewing to do. And so I got up again and put on my dressing gown. I'm quite warm."

Reginald hesitated, having strange sensations—not for the first time that day.

"Well," she said, singularly, throwing her head and shoulders back, "you can kiss me now. I've forgiven you."

III

THE artistes were all together after a second act rehearsal one morning when Jack Moy, the leading man, said to Mr. Frank:

"What about seats for the first night, Cecil, my lad?"

"Only the most urgent applications considered," replied Mr. Frank buoyantly. "We could sell right out if we wanted."

Thereupon everybody present made the most urgent application, except Em Flyfax, who had already commandeered a box, and except Reginald. Reginald did not ask for anything, because if he had asked he would have been obliged to support his demand by saying that the seat was for his wife. Now he had somehow never found the right moment to mention to either Miss Flyfax or Lady Queenie (who haunted the rehearsals) that he possessed a wife; and he was mysteriously ashamed to do so at the critical instant. No one in the company knew anything about him, though everyone was inexplicably polite, and some were even almost deferential to him.

"If I could have a stall for the second performance, Mr. Frank—" he suggested later, more privately, knowing that there would be no difficulty whatever about the second performance.

That night he lied to Gladiola.



"Tried my best to get you a seat for the first night. Nothing doing. Booking bangs creation. But I've got one for the second."

It was not as if his relations with Emily Flyfax had been progressing. She seldom even spoke to him, save professionally. Only once, passing him in the wings, she murmured with an inscrutable transient smile:

"Siegfried!"

A name the tremendous associations of which were perfectly unknown to Reginald, who never read anything and was bored by what he would refer to respectfully as classical music.

Lady Queenie conversed with him now and then, in low and slow phrases, but Reginald could not make her out, and he soon got used to her title.

He had plenty to do, for the understudies were rehearsed as probably understudies had never before been rehearsed previous to a production. This was due entirely to Miss Flyfax, who, though paid solely to play and by no means to manage, nevertheless like many stars did more managing than the manager; the difference between her and most stars in this respect was that what she did was done apparently by kindness, certainly not by petulance or threats. Miss Flyfax saw to it that all the

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understudies, including her own, were carefully rehearsed. She said you never knew what might happen.

At the first performance everybody said to everybody "behind" that the audience was "eating it." The return for the second night beat all the records of the theater for a second night. The ticket agencies made a deal for three months. Reginald found in the press notices a few lines here and there in praise

how right Miss Flyfax had been in saying that you never knew what might happen.

"Good God!" he exclaimed to Gladiola, who was washing up. "Jack Moy's ill and I have got to play his part tonight." Then in an anxious, condescending tone: "I hope my understudy'll pull through."

He had a colossal day of it. Clothes! Wig! Jewelry! To say nothing of a long rehearsal with Emily Flyfax and sundry others. He heard that Jack Moy's illness, though authenticated by a doctor's certificate, was purely political. What he did not hear was the general opinion in the theater that to entrust an inexperienced mediocrity like Reginald with the principal male rôle was absolute madness, and that Em was off her head and old Cecil an idiot. (In the latter view old Cecil concurred.) The two bright spots were, one, that Reginald simply had no nerves, and, two, that anyhow nothing could kill the success of "Tea on the Terrace."

When the curtain went up the entire company, one person excepted, perspired with apprehension. The exception was Reginald. And Reginald was justified in not perspiring. He displayed no original talent, but he came through with a sort of negative credit, partly by imitating Jack Moy to the least detail and partly by the very expert aid of Miss Flyfax. What utterly amazed the management and the entire company, including Reginald, was the clear fact that the audience loved Reginald. He had a very marked personal triumph, and at the end Miss Flyfax compelled him to take a call alone, at which the company smiled

with sinister significance. Still, the company, except Emily, pelted him with compliments; and Cecil Frank slapped his back and addressed him as Reggie.

In the splendid privacy of Jack Moy's dressing room, Reginald got a note. "Come now and be admired, my Siegfried.—Em." Yet at the final fall of the curtain she had left him without a word! On the way to the star's

"Who are you?" she asked. "You're intriguing us so dreadfully." She had a thrilling voice. "I'm Reginald Sark," he replied, confused.

dressing room he encountered Lady Queenie, who clapped her hands.

"Going?" said he.

"Yes. I should be in the way!" said she. And then very surprisingly she kissed him.

"Don't tell," said she, over her shoulder, running off.

IV

EMILY FLYFAX's dressing room, which she had occupied continuously for several years, had a more personal quality than the majority of dressing rooms. Emily, in fact, had remade the place. It was full, perhaps rather too full, of small bits of old furniture, brocade, photographs, mirrors, electric lamps, and especially cushions. If it lacked anything it lacked ventilation, but Emily felt no need for ventilation. The cushions were heaped about the floor, and Emily had only two cushions between herself and the carpet when Reginald entered and the dresser softly closed the door. Emily did not speak at first. She simply looked up with burning eyes which ranged, as it were, prowling, all over Reginald's figure. She had not removed her paint and powder,

of his rendering of the mute guest. At the end of a fortnight he was quite accustomed to playing in a first rate West End show and receiving £10 on a Friday night—far more than he had ever received before.

One evening he excitedly informed Gladiola that the two stars, Emily and Jack, had had a terrific row. The next morning an express messenger brought a note to the flat, and Reginald saw



but paint and powder became her at all times; she could carry them off even at close quarters in a small room. She was scarcely young. She was, however, a magnificent, voluptuous and thrilling creature. Rendered at once self-conscious and absent-minded by his success, Reginald could not break the silence.

"Well, my child!" she murmured at length. The richness of her voice was equaled only by the perfection of her enunciation. The solemn tones permeated the room like an odor, and then seemed to hang in the heavy air like clouds of incense. "You don't know how wonderful you are!"

"Do you really think I can act?" he asked, ravenous for more praise.

She smiled indulgently, and then said:

"I don't mean your acting. I mean *you*! . . . Siegfried!"

Reginald heard and beheld her as in a dream from which he could not awake, through a veil formed of wild hand clapping and bright upturned faces and visions of a career. And she was piercing the veil. Now she was kneeling in the cushions close to him, with clasped hands and transfigured face, and he, on his feet, was high above her in the terrific glare of light. His perceptions were at best never keen, but he could not fail to see that the splendid, mature woman was in an enchantment, a rapture, an ecstasy; she had no more shame, and no less directness, than a goddess, than Venus herself. She had passed beyond all conventions, but despite this the native distinction and force of her individuality maintained her dignity in full. Reginald was frightened—deliciously and incomprehensively frightened, perhaps—still frightened.

Emily breathed:

"Oh! You divine simpleton! Can't you see I'm a *grande amoureuse*?"

She appeared to become incandescent; Reginald might have been burnt up. His skin crept down his back. He was wondering, not without inklings of the truth, what a *grande amoureuse* might be: when a rap sounded on the door.

"Well," cried Miss Flyfax with extraordinary presence of mind, and then rising very rapidly and yet without haste: "Come in. Come in. Don't stand out there." Her features were entirely recomposed.

"Mrs. Sark wishes to see Mr. Reginald Sark at once," said the dresser, entering.

The star was putting on an embroidered Japanese robe, with which she clad herself in a single moment. Reginald blushed deeply. He did not know where to look or what to say. He was fully aware that his wife had been in the audience, for he had obtained the ticket for her, but in the intensity of his egoism he had completely forgotten her.

"Ask Mrs. Sark to come in," said Emily Flyfax with astounding tranquillity. "Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Sark? So glad to meet you. I was just telling your husband—"

There stood tiny Gladiola, no doubt a force in the vicinity of the great railway terminals, but a nonentity in Emily's dressing room. She was neat enough and not scared, and she wore her one evening dress and evening cloak; and withal she was just like an irreproachable shop girl satisfactorily titivated for an evening out. As she stood beside the large-framed, glorious, dangerous, orchidaceous many-faceted artiste, Reginald was ashamed of her. She did not look at Emily Flyfax. She looked at Reginald. And Reginald wondered what in heaven's name would happen next. What happened next was that Gladiola burst into tears—and it was just as if she had burst into blossom.

"But what is the matter, Mrs. Sark?" Emily inquired kindly. Gladiola replied, to Reginald, not to the actress:

"It's only because I'm so happy. Oh! Reggie, you were too beautiful!"

Her emotion suddenly gave her an unrivaled dignity. She had lost all to her Reginald, and in so doing had found a new impressiveness, which overcame him. She sat down.

"You must drink something," said Emily Flyfax quickly, seizing a wineglass.

The glass crumpled in her hand like a biscuit, and the fragments fell on the floor with a muffled silvery sound. Emily got another glass and gave the receptive Gladiola some soda water.

"Thank you," said Gladiola weakly.

"How glad I am for you!" said Emily sympathetically.

"Your hand's bleeding, Miss Flyfax," said Reginald, more in order to say something, anything, than because the fact interested him.

"That's nothing," Emily answered. "I often do it."

Reginald led his Gladiola away.

V

THE next morning he was round at the theater, for no plain reason, except that in a night he had become a careerist, and the instinct of the careerist had mysteriously drawn him to the theater. Sure enough, Cecil Frank, catching sight of him, invited him into the managerial office and gave him one of the excessively thick Turkish cigarettes which forever lay in the inexhaustible silver box on the managerial desk.

"Look here, Reggie," said Cecil Frank, leaning back in his armed, swiveled chair. "We needn't beat about the bush. I'll give you a three years' contract, twenty-five pounds a week, usual conditions. It's a cinch for you, but I've always been one to encourage the young. Say the word, and we'll sign now."

"But how soon is Moy coming back?" asked Reginald, with wise irrelevance and acting calmness better than he had ever acted anything on the stage.

"Between ourselves," Mr. Frank replied, "Moy isn't coming back. This theater's too small to hold him and Miss Flyfax together any more. And I'm not sorry. But what's Moy got to do with it? Whatever you play, and whether you play or not, you'll get your salary. However, I don't mind telling you you'll play Moy's part for the rest of the run, which means till kingdom come, more or less."

"I can't sign anything without consulting the excellent Cutter," said Reginald. "He made me promise." Which was clever but untrue.

"Shall we say thirty?" cooed Mr. Frank. "Remember I've got you for the run at ten." Mistaken tactics by Mr. Frank!

"I'll push off and see the excellent Cutter at once," said Reginald, and he pushed off, Mr. Cecil Frank falsely pretending that after all he preferred Reginald to see Mr. Cutter before signing anything.

It is marvelous how things get about. There was no waiting to be done by Reginald in the agent's outer office, and he was received in an entirely new manner.

Mr. Cutter listened attentively, and then said:

"We'll do nothing today. I'll come and see the show tonight. Then I shall be in a better position to judge."

The success of Reginald's second heroic performance exceeded that of the first. Mr. Cutter slipped round behind at the close.

"Don't you sign for three years," said he. "We'll make him tear up your present contract and give you a new one, for Jack Moy's part, for the run, at thirty. You'll be worth a bit above thirty before the end of the run."

"How much was Moy getting?" Reginald asked thoughtfully.

"Sixty-five."

On the following morning Reginald nudged his wife in bed. She awoke and stroked his cheek. He yawned.

"Frightfully heavy work," said he. "And the matinee today! I'll have my breakfast in bed at half-past eleven. You'd better take your things into the other room and dress there, because I'm going to sleep again." She kissed him delicately in silence and arose. At eleven-thirty, all spruce, smiling and obedient, she tiptoed into the bedroom with his breakfast attractively arranged on a tray, apologizing for obeying him so exactly.

"You'd better look out for another flat, my dear," said he kindly. "By the way, I've been wondering how much I ought to allow you for housekeeping. If you use your own bit for your clothes you ought to be able to look quite smart, oughtn't you?"

"Oh, yes!" she agreed eagerly, betraying by not the least sign that only a week ago she had sole and unquestioned control of the combined conjugal exchequer.

All these marvelous changes happened because a few people, chiefly women, clapped their hands enthusiastically and looked up with bright shining faces when Reginald made an exit or took a call. The other members of the company began to make nasty remarks about the size of Reginald's head, the badness of his acting and the idiocy of the public. But Reginald did not hear the remarks.

VI

It was a few days later that Reginald received a quite emotional note from Emily Flyfax. "Dear Mr. Sark, I should be so pleased if you could come to my flat this afternoon for tea. If I don't hear from you I'll expect you. Yours sincerely."

By the same post he was made aware of the fact that the illustrated press was reacting to his existence. The two great rivals in the illustrated daily press were running neck and neck after him. Both at the same moment wanted photographs and matter—an interview. Reginald had (Continued on page 139)

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"No woman—on the stage—is qualified to be a mother unless she has snow-white hair. But just look at me!"

The Woman of Experience

To the Bride she said: "Don't cling. Be chary of caresses—not cold, but cool. Be interested in other men. And Barry will eat out of your hand."

To the Groom she said: "Keep her guessing. Let her flirt. Do a bit of flirting yourself. Don't let her see that you care. Keep up the houp-la!"

A Story of Modern Married Life

by ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE

Illustrations by H. J. Mowat

"If your mother were living," proceeded Mrs. Verplanck, "all this wouldn't be any business of mine. And I'd welcome the chance to keep quiet about it. I——"

"But I don't want you to keep quiet about it, Aunt Hilda!" pleaded Audrey. "That's why I came to you. You're the only mother I ever had, since I was a baby. Even if you aren't quite—quite like the mothers in story books and—on the stage. So I——"

"No woman on the stage is qualified to be a young girl's mother, or the mother of a vagrant son," put in Mrs. Verplanck, with an air of finality, "unless she has snow-white hair, parted in the middle. And mothers in story books must always be able to 'gather the sorrowing child to their ample bosoms.' Thanks to wise dieting and to a natural taste in corsets, my bosom is not ample. And, until Clarice goes out of business, my hair will not be white. Even then, I shall not part it in the middle. Pardon the interruption. But when you say I have nothing in common with mothers in fiction and drama, I feel it is due to my self-respect to explain why I haven't."

"But I——"

"During the war, every eighteen year old soldier boy's mother was depicted in posters as not less than eighty years old. Which means that she could not have become a mother until she was

well past sixty. Now, I shall never consent to be 'well past sixty.' So if you have come to me for advice about your marriage, keep bearing in mind that I am not a traditional matron, exuding quarts of maternal counsel, but a perennially youthful aunt, who is going to give you the sort of advice you can live by."

"Thank you so much!" said Audrey, yet with a tinge of cloudiness lingering in her big gray eyes. "You see, it is all so sudden and—and so queer. I haven't had time to get my bearings. Just think! I've been 'out' only two months. This time, three months ago, I was moiling away over my lessons. And Mam'selle's maxim to all of us was: 'don't even let yourselves think about marriage. Plenty of time for that when your education is finished!' And when Barry asked me to marry him—and when you agreed with him that it needn't be a long engagement—why, I felt so—so sort of swept off my feet! And——"

"I know," soothed Mrs. Verplanck. "I know. I felt the same way, myself. Many girls do. In fact, most girls do. That is why I am going to save you from the silly mistakes they make. Everything depends on starting out rightly. The start is everything. My husband and I were married for fifteen years. And for only four months, in all, was he a hero to me. Those were the first two months after he married me and the first two months after he died. I started with a handicap. There was no one to

advise me as I am going to advise you, now. I had to make up rules as I went along. And that is almost as risky a thing to do in marriage as in a card game."

The hard old eyes in the artistically young face looked down ponderingly on the freshness and appealing simplicity of the girl beside her. Then Mrs. Verplanck resumed:

"I was just your age—a month older—when I married Ashur Verplanck. He wasn't a Greek god. I never met any real-life man who was. But, to me, he was a blend of Prince Charming and John Drew. Yes, and he was in love with me, too. Looking back, I can see that, just at first, he loved me better than everything else on earth put together—except, of course, the \$600,000 I inherited from my grandmother."

"Aunt Hilda!"

"My dear, \$600,000 is not a rival. It is a rare accomplishment. I wasn't jealous of its charm over him. I wasn't jealous of anything. I was just crazy. And he was as mad about me as I was about him. We were as delightfully unashamed in our love making as a pair of rose bugs or—"

"Aunt—!"

"We were. The only trouble was that he tired of it before I knew anyone could tire. He was very discreet and thoughtful about it all. But 'business' began to call him away from home. And, by sheer luck—ill luck, at that—I happened to find out what the 'business' was. No, it wasn't a 'she.' It was a 'they.' Their name was legion. He was an inspired polygamist, Ashur was. To the end of his days, he never could be made to understand that polygamy is an effort to get more out of life than life contains. At first I wanted to die. Then I wanted him to die. Then I grew sane. I picked up what was left of the sorry game and went on playing it. And I grew to understand where my big mistake had been. I could have kept Ashur Verplanck slavishly devoted to me, if I hadn't let him see I was slavishly devoted to him. And I want to save you from what I lived through. It can be done. And I'm going to tell you how."

"But—"

"If I were the ample-bosomed or white-haired mother of tradition, I'd begin by saying that marriage is a state of bearing and forbearing; and of endless mutual sacrifice and of putting another's interests and happiness ahead of your own. It is nothing of the sort. Not modern marriage. Not the kind of marriage I want you to enjoy. I might counsel you to be the good little old-fashioned wife who lives only for her husband's welfare and who gives a brilliant imitation of a doormat. I shall not advise you any such thing. For I want you to be happy."

"But, Aunt Hilda—the Bible says—"

"The Bible says things which would turn Wall Street and Fifth Avenue into deserts. Besides, the Bible was written before the day of the modern husband."

"But—"

"You are nineteen. You know innumerable French verbs. And you can play four Chopin waltzes without making more than three mistakes in any one of them. That is the sum of your assets in the line of worldly experience—thanks to the convent-like way your father saw fit to bring you up. Now—"

"Please—"

"I'm not blaming him. But it leaves more for me to do—or undo. This is the case—you are nineteen, and deliciously ignorant. Or innocent. The two words usually mean the same thing. The loss of one is too apt to imply the loss of the other. You are nineteen. Barry Laidlaw is almost in the shadow of thirty. That means he has spent at least ten years in rolling up a past; and has sown wild oats on both sides of the Atlantic. He told me you were 'a flower.' Probably that is what caught his fancy. For he's certainly had enough experience with weeds. His life has been choked with them. Such men turn at last to the 'flower' type of girl."

"But Aunt Hilda—!"

"Oh, I know what I'm saying! He has all the money he needs; and nearly all of it he wants. He's good-looking; and he has

family. Such men don't live like hermits—not in New York, certainly—and they don't spend their leisure hours in collecting and classifying Egyptian manuscripts. I'll say this for Barry Laidlaw—he has been clever and cool-headed enough to keep out of any ugly or costly scandal. He's steered a shrewd course."

"Oh, I wish—!"

"So do I. So does every good woman. But we have to take them as we find them. Now, if you start out as the snuggling and exacting and clinging bridelet, Barry will adore you—for the best part of a month. After that, you will be as cloying to him as a gallon of grenadine syrup. He'll tire of you. And he'll seek pleasure elsewhere. It's at such a crisis that the average marital bark first hits the rocks. And it never gets wholly clear of them. It will mean endless suffering to you; and endless boredom to him."

"But," expostulated Audrey, "how can I—?"

"Begin your married life as you mean to go on with it. Be chary of caresses. Keep him guessing; and let his guesses be pessimistic. Don't be cold to him. Just be cool—coolly and sweetly indifferent. Don't weaken an inch on that attitude. Be interested in other men. Be—"

"Oh!"

"Not in any one man; but in every presentable man. Show such men much more cordiality than you show him. And—unless I'm very much mistaken—Barry Laidlaw will begin to eat out of your hand; and he'll keep on eating out of it."

"But I don't want him to eat out of my hand! And I don't want to—to flirt with any other men! And I don't want to be standoffish and cool with him! I—I love him so! I—"

"If you want to hold his

interest for life, do as I say. If you want to lose it in a month, follow your own foolish impulses. Make your choice."

It was a tearful and miserably disillusioned girl who left her aunt's house that afternoon. From babyhood, Audrey had looked on Mrs. Verplanck as an oracle. It did not occur to her to dispute the older woman's dictum. But it had changed her engagement from a thing of golden bliss to an ordeal.

Six weeks later, Audrey Verplanck and Barrington Laidlaw were united in the holy bonds of wedlock at St. Thomas's Church in the presence of something like a thousand invited on-lookers; while several thousand more New Yorkers peered owlishly at the awning between church door and curb—an awning erected to protect guests from the baleful effects of a flawlessly beautiful afternoon. A white-surpliced rector received a fat fee for performing the brief and terrific ceremony. A surpliced, full choir received a fatter fee for chanting the *Lohengrin* bridal chorus. An obese Metropolitan Opera star received the fattest fee for squalling "The Voice That Breathed O'er Eden," *fortissimo*, from behind a screen of orchids. Above the couple and carved into the church's stones stood forth the dollar mark and other cynical emblems which the joke loving architect had woven into the tracery of his friezes, and which the worshipers had not yet bothered to discern. And, thus auspiced, the two lovers became man and wife.

After a month at Stockbridge, they came back to New York and opened the old Laidlaw house which had been empty, save for the caretaker, since the death of Barry's mother.

From the outset of that New York winter, the young Laidlaws were a puzzle to their friends. Instead of beginning their married career by avoiding all intruders and seeking to be alone together all the time, and then gradually becoming normal and drifting a bit apart—they were like a middle-aged married couple. They welcomed any form of diversion. The big-eyed little wife treated her good-looking husband as though he were some not-too-interesting acquaintance. And she accepted wholesale attentions from the men of his set. The two plunged into the gayest of gay winters.

At cabarets, when women with bobbed or doubtful hair gazed languorously at Barry, his wife did not honor the would-be vampires with a second glance. At dances, when Audrey "sat out," six times in succession, with some Lothario in secluded corners,

ENTERTAINMENT —and something more

WHEN you sit down to read a copy of COSMOPOLITAN you do so in the confidence that you are going to be entertained.

Of course you prefer certain stories to others. No one person, with individual tastes, could normally like every story in every issue. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, COSMOPOLITAN gives you a full measure of solid enjoyment. That's why you read it. That's why millions of Americans read it every month.

But COSMOPOLITAN holds more than entertainment. Count up the stories and articles in this issue and see how many of them make you think.

Barry di
as up-to-
antly frie
full rein.
Then
Romeyns
Barry



"I've played the dirty game as well as a novice could be expected to—but next time, I warn you, I'll kill you."

Barry did not so much as frown. They were an ideal couple; as up-to-the-minute couples go. They seemed to have a pleasantly friendly *modus vivendi* and were content to give each other full rein.

Then came the big and noisy informal studio dance at the Romeyns'.

Barry and Audrey went there—together, of course. But they

were not together for more than thirty seconds after they entered the studio. Congenial acquaintances bore down upon them and swept them apart into a tumult of diverse interests.

It was along toward twelve o'clock when Roy Mayhew dared Audrey to slip away from the dance with him for a half-hour at the Café Suzette; the newest and most audacious of the various supper clubs that had sprung, mushroom-like, into life in the

The Woman of Experience

Forties, off Fifth Avenue. And Audrey—albeit with a little catch of her breath—accepted the dare. She cast a glance over her shoulder toward Barry. He was in an alcove, bending very closely over Blanche Durham, a divorcee of husband-snatching tastes. He caught Audrey's eye and nodded smilingly to her; then bent once more above the half-recumbent woman on the alcove couch.

The Café Suzette was not garish or noisy or in any way flaunting. Indeed, there was nothing about it to make the veriest novice shrink from entering its discreet portals.

Its lights were pink-veiled. Its hangings were dark. Its niches and hidden corners were many. Its music was of far higher class than is found at free-for-all dance places. Its waiters looked like stage diplomats. Its food was almost worthy of the national-debt prices charged for it.

The proprietor had begun life as "Schwartz." Schwartz in the old days had run a little Italian restaurant on the first floor of a four-story brownstone house in the West Thirties. For the house's rental he had paid \$7,000 a year. There were seldom more than a dozen diners a day to be seen in his first floor seventy-five cent table d'hôte restaurant. At the end of six years he had retired with a fortune of more than half a million dollars; and, as a flyer, had opened the Café Suzette.

Thither flocked everybody who had no right to be there. Husbands and wives (accompanied by other people's husbands and wives); bobbed-haired débutantes with chastely invisible ears; patent-leather-haired youths who were striving with brainless energy to roll up a Past; three-figure stage girls with paunchy and hard breathing old men; and more than a smattering of folk whose names adorned Sunday supplement society notes.

Audrey did not care for the Café Suzette. For one thing, it was not interestingly shocking. For another, the dance floor was not as good as the floor she had quitted at the Romeyns'. Also, at least a dozen of her friends were at the tables or else dancing. And she did not like the way they looked from her to Mayhew and then at one another. She fell to remembering stories she had heard about her escort. Mayhew's reputation was spotless. But it was spotlessly black, without a single redeeming white blotch.

As he and Audrey were returning to their table after their first dance, they came face to face with Barry Laidlaw who had just come in. Nestling confidently and lovingly beside Barry was Blanche Durham.

Instantly, everyone in the room who knew the Laidlaws by sight turned to gaze in breathless interest at the chance meeting between husband and wife. And, alas, everybody was grievously disappointed! For, though the Café Suzette is scarce the kind of place where a man and his bride would care to be seen by each other, in company with illicit companions, yet both Harry and Audrey carried off the situation perfectly.

They smiled pleasantly, even warmly, understandingly. Then the cordial smile of each included the other's partner. And Audrey and Mayhew continued on the way to their table, while the head waiter piloted Blanche and her escort to another end of the room. Twice, later, during dances, the two couples came within smiling distance. And, both times, the jolly salutations were repeated.

"H'm!" grunted old Colonel Manning, to the super-costly chorus dancel who was enlivening his evening. "Those youngsters are either on the verge of a mutually arranged divorce or else they are starting their married life in a way that I'd give a million dollars to have started mine!"

Audrey was first of the two to leave the Café Suzette. As she passed her husband's table she waved a gay little hand in farewell. Barry half arose and called out a cheery "Good night!"

And again, "all the world wondered."

When Barry came home, a half-hour later, he glanced in at Audrey's dressing room as he passed down the hall on the way to his own. Through the partly opened door, he saw her lounging in a deep chair; her maid busy with the shining masses of her hair. And he repeated his friendly "Good night!" Merrily, from the depths of the big chair, she answered him, adding:

"Have a good time?"

"I did, indeed!" he called back from half down the hallway. "Didn't you?"

Her laughing response followed him along the hall and to the entrance of his own suite. Barry went into his dressing room, hesitated an instant, then dismissed his drowsy man for the night. After which he stood where he was, head bent, fists clenched, until he heard his wife's maid patter up the service stairs ten minutes later.

Then, in four strides he traversed the hallway, flung open the

door of Audrey's suite, without knocking, and stamped into the room. His wife was still sitting in the deep chair, her eyes fixed cryptically on the tiny fire that twinkled on the hearth. At sound of her husband's approach, Audrey looked quickly around. Then a little cry of dismay broke from her startled lips.

Barry Laidlaw's face was black with wrath. The temple-veins stood out like a tangle of baby snakes. His eyes were smoldering; his lips twitching. Straight up to his astounded wife he strode and clutched her roughly by the shoulder.

"Look here!" he raged, his voice thick and incoherent. "Here's where it stops!"

Lifting her bodily from her chair and whirling her around to face him, he mouthed, furiously:

"I've played the dirty game as well as a novice could be expected to! But—but, Lord—I could have killed you, when I saw you in that rotten place, tonight; and with that swine of a Mayhew! And I shall kill you, next time! I give you fair warning . . . If this is married life, then I'd rather go to the 'chair' for ending it in a he-man's way, than to go on with it. I—!"

"What's the matter?" he broke off, noticing for the first time that her long lashes were wet. "You've been crying! Did Mayhew—?"

"Mayhew?" she echoed in tearful anger. "What concern was that of yours? Mrs. Durham—"

"To blazes with Mrs. Durham!" he snarled. "Freddie Billings told me you had gone on to Suzette's. So I asked her to go there, too. I—I've done my best—but I'm damned if I can keep it up! If a husband, nowadays, has got to do the things—has got to endure the things—that I've done and endured—then I'm through! Get that? I'm through! I've done my best to—"

"Your best?" she flamed, as angry as he. "Your worst, you mean! I've—"

"My best!" he reiterated. "I've followed Mrs. Verplanck's wise advice, till—"

"What are you talking about?" she demanded, dazed.

The floodgates were down. Like any raw schoolboy, the man blurted out his story.

"She meant it all right," he growled. "I know that. And she'd had a lot of experience. I hadn't had any experience at all. Why, when she assumed I'd lived the life of a Don Juan and a Mormon and a booze battler, all rolled into one, I didn't have the nerve to tell her you were the first girl I'd ever looked at; and that the crowd used to guy me and call me 'Galahad, Junior!' I had had wonderful ideas about being married. Long, lovely evenings alone together, and trips to the country, and the kind of home life that Dad and my mother used to have. They were awfully happy, Dad and my mother were. And I used to dream that it'd be the same with you and me. But when I half-way hinted at it to your aunt, she said to me: 'A present-day girl would tire of that in a month; and she'd look for amusement from some livelier man. Keep her guessing. Let her flirt. Encourage it. And do a good bit of flirting, yourself, to keep her interested in you. Don't let her see that you care. Keep up the *houp-la!*' She knew better than I. So I tried—"

"Aunt Hilda told you that?" gasped Audrey, incredulous and wide-eyed. "She told you that? Why, it's the very same thing she told me! And oh, it's been so horribly hard to keep on doing it! And I hated it all so!"

"Then, why in blazes," he stammered, blankly, "why in blue blazes did you—?"

"Oh, I wanted you to keep on loving me!" she wailed, crumpling up and weeping unashamed. "She said you'd get tired of me if I didn't. But I'd a million times rather have you get tired of me than—than—"

The rest of her sentence was strangled against his big chest, while his arms crushed the very breath out of her.

"Listen!" he said ten minutes later, when both of them had quieted down a little. "Do you know how to knit?"

"Of course, I do!" she declared. "I knit beautifully. Only, Aunt Hilda said—"

"Tomorrow night," he decreed, "we're going to have steak and onions and apple pie for dinner. Then, in the evening, you're going to knit by this fire. And I'm going to read 'David Copperfield' aloud to you. And we're going to turn my rooms into a guest suite. And fire my man and that wooden-faced French maid of yours. And—"

"Oh!" she sighed in utter rapture as she gazed maternally down on him from her throne on his knee. "Won't it be gloriously heavenly? Only—only we must both promise solemnly never—never—to tell Aunt Hilda. It would break her poor heart!"

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"You may have acted like a wrong-headed child, but there is a finer side of you—and I'm going to marry that side."

*The experiences of a girl and a man
who began their happiness by agreeing to put*

All Their Cards *on the* Table

by DANA GATLIN

Illustrations by Robert E. Johnston

WHEN Martin Haven drove up with his wife to the picturesque little inn, that late afternoon of June, there seemed nothing in the world, either tangibly material or spiritual, to mar the serene enjoyment of their brief stopover. Over the spot, between the placidly rippling Delaware to the front and the uplifting green-robed hills to the back, there lay a heavy air of hush, almost of lassitude, such as seeps to the very soul and does it good.

Everything was quiet, broodingly silent.

Mart Haven, stopping his car for a moment, halted on the red bridge which spans a mountain brook just before the road meets the driveway to the inn; paused, evidently, to soak in and to comment on this marvel.

"I don't know why the intense solitude here always strikes you so," he said. "For there is no solitude—not really. There's always a string of cars passing, and people sitting out on the porch or playing the nickel machine in the back dining room. Yet for some reason, here you always have the feeling of being shut away from the world. It's wonderful."

He glanced at his wife for her approbation.

"Yes," agreed Zoë, as she regarded the scene, "it does give

that impression—shut away from the world." As she repeated his phrase was there something peculiar in her inflection?—a shadow, the veriest ghost of a shadow, of something veiled in those soft, slate-colored eyes? But no, of course not; for Mart, looking closely at her, eager for her approbation, detected nothing; and Martin knew his wife well enough to have detected the slightest hint of a reservation; he knew his wife better than most husbands do, for there were no reservations between them—never had been. That was, in large measure, why their marriage had been so singularly unmarred by stress or storm, why it had flowed along as smooth and unruffled as the Delaware down there just taking on the first sheen of sunset.

"I thought you'd like it," said the husband, in a tone of satisfaction. "That's why I saved it up as a surprise for you."

He restarted the motor and laughed, a little low, satisfied chuckle such as men give when revealing a secret they know will be pleasing.

"We're not going on to Port Jericho, as I told you," he informed her. "We're stopping overnight here. And maybe over tomorrow, too, if you like it—as I think you will."

All Their Cards on the Table

She didn't answer at once, so he said:

"You do like the idea, don't you?"

"Why, yes, of course, but—"

Did she appear to be pulling herself together just a trifle?—to be summoning a tone of almost too vivacious acquiescence?

"Of course I want to stay here, Mart! It's too adorable for words. So quiet and sweet. It looks and feels just like heaven—" Her voice trailed away. For a second her eyes darkened; took on a flying-off expression. Then, just as suddenly as they had flown away, they came back to rest on him, smiling, alert; her hand sought his and pressed it, and her voice was colored with the warmth and affection he knew so well, as she resumed: "and it's sweet in you, Mart, to want to surprise me—just like you—you're always so sweet to me. I don't deserve it."

"Fiddlesticks!" Trying to conceal his pleasure at her appreciation but squeezing that proffered hand, he went on rather brusquely: "Knew you'd like it—been saving it up. You said once, you remember, you'd never been in this part of the country." He gave another exultantly self-pleased chuckle. "Remember my asking you?"

She nodded, and her husband climbed out of the car, helped her alight and led the way inside, that momentary doubt, that less-than-shadow which had briefly seemed to threaten the perfection of his "surprise," completely dispelled. He knew that if Zoë said she was pleased, she sincerely was. For there were never any reservations between them, only the tenderest and sanest of full understanding. This was why their life together always flowed so smoothly, with no dash of petty withholdings or pettier deceit and consequent mutual recriminations; and no dash, ever, of the passion or of violence or warfare which often makes domesticity an affair so desperate. An ideal matrimonial state, you'll admit, even though it does lack the color, the spice, which makes many marriages more vivid.

Zoë, loitering in the doorway a second, let her eyes roam once more over that tranquil vista; was she reflecting, perhaps, that the scene accorded so uniquely with the unusual harmony of her own life?

Her husband's voice called from within. She entered the hallway, halted. He called again.

"Come on in here—this is the bar, but it's all right. Louis even lets ladies drink at his bar."

Then, as she still hesitated, he came out to her. "Come on and meet Louis, dear. He's the proprietor and"—in an amused undertone—"the most ingratiating scamp this side of Alsace-Lorraine. A real character. You'll be crazy about him."

But Zoë demurred. She wanted to go to her room first—was tired—felt hot and dusty; she could meet Louis later. Mart looked at her a bit puzzled. It wasn't like Zoë to complain of fatigue, and she hadn't said anything before about being tired or hot.

Meanwhile Zoë had hurried on up the stairs in the wake of the boy with the bags, not turning her head, though Louis had himself ponderously come out to the hall, unwontedly exerting himself thus to greet Mart's wife. But Zoë was disappearing round a curve in the stairs, with averted head.

The marriage of the Havens had come about in rather an un-

usual way. It was not a romantic marriage, not even an emotional one. The principal elements brought into the alliance were sanity, reasonableness, mutual liking and respect and admiration and an intense and genuine feeling of real, glowing comradeship—these elements and one other: a complete, sweeping, all-aboveboard candor. This last, perhaps, was after all the predominant item and it was the woman, Zoë, who had suggested and insisted on its inclusion. She had insisted on marrying, if she married at all, with "all the cards on the table."

You see that Zoë had a good many cards, in that deck of her past experience, to bring forth in exhibit. This was, in great measure, why she was marrying Martin Haven at all. And Mart understood this perfectly. She let him understand it, deliberately, on purpose, laying that stress on utter frankness

and truth. She was dispassionately frank in declaring herself passionately tired of emotional storms.

For there had been plenty of emotional storms in Zoë's brief career.

She had been a type of girl that seemed to invite adventure. Her very looks betrayed this impulsive, restless, seeking temperament—always waywardly adventuring, restlessly seeking for something never quite found. She was pretty beyond gainsaying, with that soft cloud of dark hair and that delicately textured oval face and those lips with their tender, dragging smile but with a trick of willful compression, and, especially, with those slow, slate-colored, long-fringed eyes—deep, attentive, mesmeric eyes given to that habit, all of a sudden, of flying off somewhere, on some quest you never knew where to follow.

She was alone in the world so far as immediate family connections were concerned, when she came to New York. She came to New York soon after she finished school and gained possession of her

comparatively sufficient inheritance; came avowedly to "see something of life"—which means she purposed to set about satisfying that inner craving for excitement.

Well, New York is a good place in which to embark on such a quest. Especially if you're young, beautiful, unhampered, and have a certain amount of means—and a temperament like Zoë's. Sufficient to state that she found her adventures; the amazing thing is, considering the impulsive, uncharted, unreckoning way she directed her life, that she came out of it all as scot-free as she did. She herself, later, realized the marvel of this, and thanked her stars for her good fortune.

At first she drifted as others of her ilk have drifted, to that quasi-Bohemian quarter that fringes round Washington Square; she had a good time down there, what with her looks, her money and her nature; and it was during this stage of her experience that she first met Mart Haven—and Dennis O'Neill, also, the illustrator. But Mart didn't figure prominently in the picture at that time. He was too sturdy and staid, too similar to the things she had fled from to be compatible with that new, untrammelled and intoxicating fling at freedom.

But, later, Zoë tired of the Bohemian atmosphere. And, quite naturally, she moved on to another purlieu. She lived this time, in one of those wonderfully attractive little thimble-apartments just off Madison Avenue and just above where Central Park begins. Another girl shared the flat with her, a

She was in the mood, she said, to do something desperately foolish

ZOË had to confide in somebody.

"I've been right on the verge of marrying Bingo Sayles," she told Mart Haven that night in her apartment, "and I'm hanging on to you as a sort of anchor. I need an anchor."

"Why?" he asked.

She eyed him.

"Because I'm too crazy about Bingo . . . No, I'm not in love with him—or with anybody. I don't want to be in love—ever. Love is so cruel—it stings and tortures and tramples and mocks you . . . I know I shouldn't discuss these things, but I've got to. I've been—I've been a fool. And—oh, Mart!—I think—I'm afraid—I'd better marry him."

The man looked at her, a searching look.

"Marry me," he said.

"No."

But she did.

And this is the story of what happened.

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Mart was polite—but what he wanted was to kill this man with his two hands.

girl much of Zoë's own caliber. The two of them, in that little bijou of a place, with their similar craving for "something doing," had a merry time of it. However, New York is a habitat where one escapes gossip longer than anywhere else in the country. Probably because the big town is so filled with Zoë Burnhams. It's no novelty, there, to see young women, well-mannered and as often as not presumably well-born, living their lives as appar-

ently free individuals, and bowing to no too-strict conventional code. If a girl has intelligence, a bank account, and a tolerable sense of decorum, she can, as the phrase goes, "get away with it."

Anyway there was no real evil attached to Zoë. Hers was just an unordered, hectic, fevered, excitement seeking life—and with plenty of excitement, you may be sure, answering to the call of this lovely and unfettered and undisciplined Zoë.

It was at the end of this gayly haphazard period in the flat just off Madison Avenue that Mart Haven reappeared.

Zoë had now been in New York six years. She was twenty-six. One day she chanced to meet Mart on the Avenue, their first meeting in months, and asked him to call. After that he saw her several times; Mart had from the outset been attracted to Zoë, been genuinely fond of her: it had been she who had grown away from that earlier friendship. But now, for some reason, she seemed to desire his companionship; and, one day, with characteristic impulsiveness she told him why.

And it was out of this impulsive revelation of hers that developed that rather peculiar marriage of Zoë Burnham and Mart Haven.

They were sitting, this afternoon, destined to be so eventful, in Zoë's cozy little sitting room. Perhaps it was the firelight, and the hour which subtly invites confidences, that impelled her, unwontedly, to become confidential. After a rather long pause—Zoë was these days developing a new habit of silences, thoughtful and at times almost moody—she had looked up from her sober contemplation of that ruddy glow and flicker, and asked him if he knew why she'd been seeing him so often lately—"running after him," she phrased it. Then, without giving him time to speak, she had rushed on to her answer—to her confidence. She was using him as a sort of ballast; an anchor, she said; she was tired, desperately tired—worn out—in the mood to do something desperately foolish. In fact, she'd been on the verge of becoming engaged to a man, Bingo Sayles—Mart knew of him. And she'd been hanging on to Mart as a sort of protection.

Yes, Mart knew of this Bingo Sayles; knew of him as a handsome, agreeable young "fellow about town"—the kind that seems fascinating to women. He knew, also, that Zoë had been seeing considerable of him, but was astonished at this evident extent of her fascination; and even more astonished at the certainly peculiar method she'd taken to safeguard herself.

Naturally, the odd subject once opened, they discussed it in considerable detail: the girl admitting her realization of the untowardness of her act—"I know one shouldn't discuss these things, Mart—one doesn't. But I feel so sort of at sea—so sort of alone and rudderless and drifting—"

"All right, then—tie up to me," said Mart, smiling but with a warm, friendly kind of smile. He seemed to want genuinely to help her, even in this paramourly "untoward" situation. "I'll be your anchor if that's what you wish—a perfectly safe and trustworthy old anchor."

She gave his hand a convulsive squeeze—he could see she was genuinely overwrought—and went on to pour it all out. "You see the trouble's chiefly with me. I'm tired of everything, sick of everything. I've been such a fool—oh, I pin no laurels on myself! But I'm just beginning to realize what a supreme fool I've been. Oh, I'm tired, *tired!*"—her voice lifting suddenly and breaking on the high note. "I'm tired of all these emotional storms—I've been *such* a fool, Mart!"

With an abrupt movement she reached for a cigarette in a box on the table, held it in her fingers a moment, then dropped it unconsciously and resumed her somber study of the fire.

"Then, if you feel this way," asked Mart, watching her, "why do you think of marrying Sayles?" It was a natural enough question.

The girl shrugged without shifting her gaze. "Oh, he fascinated me in a way—and then he's crazy about me!" She became silent again, a brooding, embittered kind of silence, before she proceeded: "And then, as I said, I'm so sick of everything—I'm in the mood to do something foolish and desperate."

"Of course you love him?" persisted Mart, measuring his words, speaking judiciously.

"No, I don't love him." She uttered it slowly, as if speaking more to herself than to her auditor, and as if contemplating the very quality of that thought. "I have never loved him. At



first he just fascinated me because he was so handsome and dashing and at the same time so cynical and base—that sort of man's supposed to have a peculiar fascination for women, I believe," with a brief flash almost humorous, almost amused. "And then, later, it sort of excited me—to see him get so crazy about me—"

"Marriage without love is scarcely admirable," said Mart, rather sternly, more didactically than he was probably aware.

"Oh, who's talking about being admirable?" she cried impatiently. She rose and walked swiftly up and down the room. "I don't pretend to be admirable—that's why I'm telling you—just for the blessed relief of spilling out to some one, for once, how unadmirable I know I am!"

"I thought I was serving as an anchor—not an exhaust, a safety valve," said Mart, dryly.

She didn't answer; just kept up that impetuous walking back and forth. Mart stood watching her. Then he said a startling thing. Only he didn't say it in a startling manner; his manner was calm, equable, most matter of fact, as he voiced that, under the circumstances, amazing proposition.

"See here," he said, "why not take me on as a permanent anchor—marry me, I mean."

The girl wheeled. Her eyes flashed and she made an angry gesture. Then her eyes filled. "Oh, Mart, how can you?—I didn't expect you to make fun of me!"

"I never was so perfectly serious in my life," and his voice, earnest and grave, indeed did ring true. "I mean it, Zoë; if you marry me you at least can't marry Sayles; there's that much to it, anyway."

She merely stared at him; said nothing—was apparently incapable of speech.

"Well, what do you say?" he asked.

Then the fire flashed again in her eyes, but again that suspicious moisture veiling it. "Who was it," she demanded, "who just now stated that marriage without love is scarcely admirable?"

Mart took a step forward and reached for her hands; she relinquished them to him, reluctantly, and raised her eyes, defensive and hard yet interrogative. "Now, listen to me, Zoë," he said. "I for my part am in dead earnest. I know—everyone knows—that the best groundwork for marriage is mutual trust, admiration and respect."

She gave a harsh little laugh. "And you trust, admire and respect me?"

"I do. You may have acted like a wrong-headed child—"

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but that's not the finer side of you. There is a finer side. Please, Zoë, give the flowers a chance—don't let the weeds drive them out. That's all I'm asking, dear. I'm not even asking that much. Just tie on to me awhile—just tie on to me for awhile and rest your troubled little heart. We can call it just an engagement if you like—but remember always that I respect and admire and trust you from the very depths of my heart."

All the bitterness had left her face; she stood weary, pallid, heedlessly twisting a bracelet on her wrist. "Something terribly wrong in me that I'm sick to death of," she said. "Always living in a sort of stew—always men—always storms—never any rest—any really sweet and satisfying rest. But I'm so sick of it, Mart—so sick of it!"

"Well," Mart said then, "if you want me to agree that you are an ignoble and hopeless creature, you're going to be disappointed."

Well, the outcome of this peculiar, perhaps one of the most peculiar proposals of marriage ever recorded, was that Zoë Burnham and Martin Haven became engaged. The announcement created a great flurry amidst Zoë's circle particularly. And to Bingo Sayles, most particularly, did it bring incredulity, then consternation, and finally anger. At length, when fully convinced that expostulation or anger were of no avail, he flung off to Palm Beach or California or some other spot where one may nurse a wounded heart and at the same time enjoy life.

At this juncture Zoë asked Mart whether, now, he wished to terminate the engagement—its chief reason for ever existing was now eliminated, namely, Bingo Sayles. She put the matter to him with utter frankness and friendliness.

"Why, the way I saw it," he replied, equally frank and friendly, "Bingo was only one of the points in the case—and a comparatively minor one at that. I thought," with his half-smile, "that you were ready to try tying to a permanent anchor—that I was to be the old anchor. Wasn't this the understanding?"

The necklace
was his wife's!
How had it
come here?
What did
Sayles know
about it?
Mart was
stunned.

"But it doesn't seem fair to you, Mart," Zoë said, very seriously. "It *isn't* fair to you. Marriage is a solemn business—it should be substantially grounded. You shouldn't be deprived of your chance at a real and abiding happiness—you should wait till you find a woman you love, really *love*, and who really loves you in return. I simply couldn't let you do this, Mart—it'd be more selfish than even I'm capable of."

"See here," said Martin suddenly, "you're not in love, are you—not with somebody else?"

She shook her head, rather wistfully. "No, I'm not in love with anyone—don't ever expect to be. Once I thought—" she broke off, looked away for a long, hushed breath, then abruptly finished: "but that came to nothing. I never expect to be in love. I don't want to—love is so cruel, it stings and tortures and tramples and mocks you. No, I don't want ever to be in love—I don't want to be buffeted."

Her voice had fallen into a mournful, brooding monotone. After it had died away, after a pause, Mart spoke again in that practical, matter of fact but warm-heartedly friendly way.

"Well, I still stand in the same position," he said—"I'm willing to take a chance. And, for my part, I believe we have a good sporting chance for happiness—for a quiet, ordered, contented kind of happiness, that is—if you're sure this is what you really want." Suddenly he leaned forward. "You're *sure*,

Zoë?—Sure you won't get bored with placidity—sure you won't begin craving thrills and emotional excitement again? You know," with a little brusque note of a laugh, "that I can't guarantee any thrills."

She flung out a hand.

"Oh, I've told you and told you!" she exclaimed impatiently. "I'm sick of storms—sick of them!"

"Well, then," he said, "it seems to me we'd better consider it settled." He moved across to her, took her hand and stroked it gently. "And remember, dear, that it's not such a wild gamble after all—remember we've got one of the solidest bases that humans know, we've got this to build on—warm friendship and good understanding. That's how some one has defined friendship, isn't it?—good understanding."

She nodded soberly. "Yes. And I once read somewhere that's the highest compact one can make with ones fellow—'let there be truth between us forevermore.' Let us make that compact, Mart."

Thus it was at her suggestion that their matrimonial enterprise be launched with "all the cards on the table." At her insistence, because Mart avowed he didn't want to bring her to any confessional. But she insisted; it wasn't an incriminating display of experience she brought forth—only a sum of impulsive wrong-headedness, recklessness, and folly; folly, at the worst.

Once in her narration, at a mention of Dennis O'Neill, a man whom she characterized as—excluding Martin himself, of course—the most genuine friend and honorable gentleman she'd ever known, she hesitated for the shadow of a second; it was an almost imperceptible hesitation, and then she passed on. But, even had Mart noticed that slight hiatus, he'd have felt no jealous suspicion. For it was not men such as he knew Dennis O'Neill to be who could ever cause him unease; no, it was such as Bingo Sayles—it was Bingo himself, that handsome, unscrupulous scamp who was somehow so fascinating to women—that for months, for more than two years, he kept locked away in a mental chamber as a sort of menacing ghost.

But he kept the fear, if the ghost was as definite as fear, locked well away; not once did it obtrude to the surface, to that calm, dispassionate, always tenderly kind surface.

The married life of the Martin Havens furnished an astonishing revelation to their acquaintances, especially to Zoë's cronies of that earlier fevered epoch. It was considered a "bad match"—all sorts of disasters were prophesied; but, as weeks rolled into months, months into years, the prophecies—as all man-made prophecies are wont to do—failed of fulfillment. Their life together flowed along as smooth and unruffled as a deep and serene river.

Yes, a singularly happy, successful union. And Zoë so changed that when her old friends saw her—which was seldom—she seemed to them a stranger. She was no longer like the wind, the flame. As pretty as ever—prettier, in fact—with the same dark cloud of hair and pale oval face and slow-moving, slate-colored eyes; but those eyes were losing their trick of restlessly flying off somewhere, and her soft lips losing that willful, mutinous expression. No, she was no longer like the wind and flame. She looked what she was—a woman happily, stably married to a kind and dependable husband. And she appreciated, fully, how kind and dependable he was.

They had been married a little more than two years when, this heavenly June-tide, they started out on the holiday motor trip on which Mart sprang Louis's picturesque inn as a long-cherished "surprise."

That evening in their room, before dinner, Mart became aware of a hidden but growing nervousness in his wife. She was unaccountably distraught, but several times, during the process of unpacking and changing into a cool frock, she drifted to the window. He supposed she was only admiring the pretty scene which stretched out below—the slick sward on which a blue hound pup was frolicking, the peaceful, turbulent little brook, that red bridge so vivid amidst the intense green, and the sunset now glorifying the river from the west.

It was a natural supposition, but once, when she turned and saw him watching, she started sharply. And why should she have shot him that look, brief but with something like furtiveness in its flashing, before she hurried back to the dresser and made a pretense of rearranging a lock of her faultlessly done hair. Mart didn't lay much stress on this, mind, only noted it because nervousness, restlessness, was so foreign to the composed Zoë who was his wife; worried only in that he feared she was overtired. So, with characteristic consideration, he amended his

first suggestion that he show her through the quaint rooms downstairs, and advised her to lie down and rest until dinner.

"You'll have twenty minutes or more," he said—"I ordered dinner for seven-thirty."

But she insisted on the inspection trip, insisted with an eagerness which pleased though it surprised him somewhat. And as he showed off Louis's treasures, she kept up a flow of enthusiastic, almost chatteringly vivacious comment, which surprised him all the more. Louis had a really interesting exhibit—he was an Alsatian, and the old-country cupboards, the colorful china and his brass and pewter, were dearer to him than anything in the world save this shrine he had provided for them in this spot of the new country which reminded him of the old. Mart was glad, of course, to see the old chap's relics so vivaciously appreciated—only he couldn't help being struck by the vivacious element in his wife more than by her appreciation: she exclaimed over each object in a manner that approached volubility, stringing out phrases that approached perilously near to chatter. It wasn't like Zoë to "take on" like this. He was touched by her effort to please him; touched, so all the more worried at the high-keyed tension which showed how tired she was; he decided definitely that they would rest over tomorrow.

However, she appeared quite her normal, gracefully composed self when, the tour finished, he led her into the bar to sample one of Louis's incomparable cocktails. She shook hands with the old fellow with charming cordiality and then stood watching him concoct the drink, looking very gracious, very dainty and soft under that crudely unshaded electric bulb. Louis, the light gleaming on his bald ruddy pate and perspiring jovial face as he vigorously shook the mixer, in his turn observed her. A little pucker formed between his small, twinkling eyes and, as he finally poured the golden liquid into the glasses, in his mellow, vowel-stressed English he asked:

"But I have seen madame before—is it not so?"

Zoë shook her head slightly, smiling vaguely, as she lifted her glass. And Mart, reaching out to touch her rim with his own, said: "No, you've made a mistake there, Louis—say," as he drained the glass, "that's some cocktail, I'll announce to the world!"

But Louis still regarded Zoë with that pucker between his eyes. "I never make mistakes in people's faces," he averred—"not me."

"Well, you have this time," said Mart, good-naturedly. "My wife's never visited these parts before—I'll show her that waterfall of yours tomorrow! Say, what're the prospects for trout for breakfast?"

At dinner and afterward, throughout the evening Mart was aware of that unwonted overkeyed tension in his wife, first too animated, then fleetingly distraught, but then, as if suddenly recalling herself, at once exhibiting that too-forced animation again. After dinner they strolled round the premises, arm in arm, while Mart pointed out and extolled the beauties. A moon was rising above the hills and transfiguring the everyday world with a fairy-white sheen; it caught with silvery effulgence in the noisy little brook and Martin, holding her arm close in his, chose to stand for a long time on the foot bridge which spanned the water. A stone, somehow dislodged somewhere on the bank, fell with a splash into the water, and Zoë, who'd been standing rigid, gave a convulsive start.

"What's the matter, dear?" asked her husband. "You seem so nervous tonight."

"Oh, I'm all right," she assured him. "Just a little headache—that's all."

"Come, then, and sit in the summer house a while—it's restful in there, and sweet with the moonlight and roses."

Did he fancy it?—he was watching her anxiously; was it so, or just imagination? Just one swift roving of eyes, turned this way and that, swiftly, as when a trapped bird looks for escape. But then, scarcely before he had caught it, she said "Very well," and took the first step toward the rustic retreat.

But they hadn't been in the summer house long before she put her hand to her head, said it felt worse, and that if he'd excuse her she would go to her room.

Sollicitous, he wished to accompany her, but she insisted that he finish his cigar in that beautiful setting; she begged him not to make her feel she was entirely ruining his evening. So, to humor her rather than suit his own desire, he let her go alone across the sward toward the house.

Just before leaving she turned round, looked at him, almost tentatively said:

"Mart."

"Yes, dear?"

"I wanted to ask you—are you really happy nowadays?"

"Why, of course, dear."

(Continued on page 51)



DORIS KENYON, the leading feminine player in the
Cosmopolitan Production, "Get-Rich-Quick-Wallington,"
is not only an actress of charm but an author and poet as well.

PHOTOGRAPH BY L. B. BROWN



BILLIE DOVE'S dark, soulful beauty fits her particularly for the part she plays in the newest Cosmopolitan Production—the sweetheart of Wallingford's pal, Blackie Daw.



EVELYN HUGHES has a brunette sparkle that has pulled her swiftly to the forefront of the amazing beauties of the Ziegfeld Follies.

PHOTOGRAPH BY EDWARD TAYLOR MORGAN



BEATRICE SWANSON of "The Last Waltz"
has a captivating charm all her own.
52 PHOTOGRAPH BY CAMPBELL DUNN

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"I can't see," said Dick, puzzled, "what difference it makes who saved you just now as long as you're—alive."

"He can't have her," said Dick's father, "and she can't have him. We'll send him abroad for a year—and get his mind off her." And so the older man learned one way in which—

Men Forget

by FRANK R. ADAMS

Illustrations by Charles D. Mitchell

SHE was dancing upon the sands of the beach when Dick first saw her.

He rubbed his eyes—perhaps he was still asleep—and looked again. No, she was real, real, but not earnest enough to be uninteresting. On the contrary, she was quite the most fascinating trespasser who had ever violated the sanctuary of the Poole estate.

It was so early in the morning that it did not seem as if she could possibly be posing with the idea of attracting anyone's attention. No, obviously she was simply playing by herself absolutely unconscious of the rest of the world.

Her dance was a formless savage thing; the movements of her flashing limbs reminded him of the prancing of a race horse before the barrier is dropped or of an Indian making his soul ready for the war path.

Dick was conscious of a thrill of thankfulness that he was there to see, and that, seeing, he appreciated.

Because there was no woman of his acquaintance of such verve, such delight in life, such foolish enjoyment of the voluptuous pleasure of motion. Her features he could not particularly distinguish; it was evident that her hair was light and short and that her head was broad and not very small, but that was all. The physical proportions of her body, though, were a delight to an eye that had long despaired of ever being satisfied. Even without shoes and stockings her ankles appeared slim and her ^{legs were} exquisitely tapered to hips that were just full enough to be feminine and no more. Her skin where it was not covered

by her scant bathing suit was rose-white and in some way dazzling. It didn't reflect the sun exactly but to the enraptured spectator it seemed to give off a radiance of its own.

Dick scarcely breathed for fear that she would run away, vanish into thin air, or prove to be merely painted on the back drop the way almost everything had turned out to be when it was something that he had thought desirable. He was in the Poole bathhouse and had gone there with the idea of getting into a bathing suit himself and taking a morning dip. But what he had seen out of the window had paralyzed his intention and he had not even started to undress. He was not the sort to go out and accost her. Even if Dick had not feared to find that she was less lovely than she seemed, he would not have approached her under any circumstances. It was not his way with a maid. In general Dick didn't have any particular way with a maid. Most of the girls whom he had ever known had sought his acquaintance. And he was still bashful, even with the ones he knew best.

So he stood there in the overalls which he had donned in order to curry "Northwest," his own particular hand-raised horse who repaid his personal attention by worshipping him as if he were a god. He didn't have many chances to take care of "Northwest" nowadays except during the summer vacations, but the horse hadn't forgotten the days, before college time, when they had spent all their time together—Dick learning geography, history, military science, fencing and marksmanship from the stiff old martinet tutor, Captain MacMurrie, and

"Northwest" himself acquiring the high school of a horse, more or less indirectly under the same master.

Neither of them had learned much of women—it had not been intended that they should. Woman-hatred was one of the tenets of faith of Jonathan Poole, Dick's father, whose heart was harshly scarred from the mysterious thing that had happened to Dick's mother ages ago before Dick could remember. College life had not widened Dick's field of feminine vision very much either. Athletics of three kinds kept him in training almost all the year round, and he was shy anyway so that a perfunctory acquaintance with other fellows' girls during "prom" weeks was about all that he could claim. Also, be it added, he had not been particularly interested in those whom he had met. The awakening thrill had not yet materialized.

Even now he watched the slim Venus on the sands in a strictly impersonal fashion, delighting in her symmetry and grace, but quite unconscious of the appeal of sex which doubtless underlay his unintentional spying.

Still, he was sensible of an unmistakable regret when she finally abandoned her unseen orchestra and danced, just as heedlessly, into the surf.

In a few moments nothing of her was visible except her head and shoulders as she buffeted the breakers that crashed on the bar.

Then, suddenly, her head disappeared; a ninth wave had knocked her down. He watched for her to get up on her feet again, but it did not happen. Only ten or fifteen seconds he waited—he knew the treacherous undertow in that spot too well to hesitate longer—and then dashed out of the bathhouse and into the lathering combers himself, stopping only to kick off his shoes.

Dick swam the way he did everything else—that is, superbly—but even he had some difficulty making any progress as soon as he lost his footing. No wonder the girl had not been able to stand up again. He found her, about twenty yards beyond the bar, still struggling but very faintly and unskillfully.

"Lie still!" he ordered, "or I'll have to knock you out the way they do in the stories."

She obeyed. Exhaustion had as much to do with her docility as did the ferocity of his command. Swimming on his back with one hand in her hair it was a matter of five minutes' heavy pulling, crosswise against the undertow, to get her back to the bar. There he stood up and carried her the rest of the way to the beach.

Dick had never been so close to anything feminine before in all his life—he had not learned to dance, first because his father had forbidden it when he was young and later because he was too shy—and even exhausted as he was the actual contact with her lovely body gave him a thrill that the world had hitherto



A scientist dissecting a butterfly was no more out of proportion than the

conspired to deny him. Seen up close, she was rather more alluring than in the long shot. There was no real reason for saying that her complexion was golden, because the prevailing glow was pink rather than yellow, but nevertheless he wanted then, and always afterward, to compare her flesh to the tawny hue of the virgin metal.

Her eyes were shut as he carried her ashore, although he felt that she was merely resting and was still conscious, so he dared verify his hopes as to her features. The mouth was sweet, too large a little, but with beautifully fashioned lips that had the coloring of red coral; and her cheeks, freckled here and there by the friendly sun, were tenderly rounded and, just now, pale beneath a slight tan. Lacking the sight of her eyes her hair fascinated him most. Maybe that was where he got that golden idea. It wasn't yellow either, exactly, but it certainly had vital lights in it, and the way it fluffed out even after being drenched advertised a permanent wave put there by Mother Nature herself.

Dick lowered her to the sands but still supported her head and shoulders in the crook of his arm. She opened her eyes—topaz, by all that was wonderful and appropriate.

She smiled, first with her eyes and then with her lips. Then she laughed.

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When he had waited too long she turned and ran up the beach.

II

THE next morning she was there again. He found her when he came out of the bathhouse.

"Oh!" she said when she saw who it was. He couldn't tell whether her tone conveyed disappointment or pleasure.

She had on a different bathing suit. This was a purple one—pastel-purple that is—the top part belted in at the waist and leaving a flare over the hips that might be defined as a skirt by a person of ample imagination. Anyway, it covered entirely the trunks which she wore under it, so that with her short hair she looked like a clean-limbed Greek boy clad only in a chiton ready for a Marathon, wrestling or any other light exercise.

"Shall we go in?" he invited with a gesture toward the water which was quite calm that morning.

"No one else is apt to come?" she asked, glancing back toward the big house that lay silent at the top of the bluff.

"No," he assured her. "Besides, they wouldn't put you off anyway."

Evidently he had misinterpreted her again because she laughed. It was a laugh that was pleasant to hear. He wondered what he could do to provoke it often.

They had a glorious time playing in the warm summer surf. "You may teach me to swim," she permitted. "I can unlearn it if necessary," she added cryptically.

"I've never had so much fun in all my life," she told him at



master of millions analyzing the girl before him. "How much?" he asked.

"That wasn't very bright of me, was it?" she asked, gently disengaging herself from his support and sitting up.

"It might have happened to anyone," Dick defended. "The undertow is pretty strong right there."

"I wasn't speaking about getting nearly drowned," she explained merrily. "I was referring to the fact that I got myself rescued by a very good-looking young man who unfortunately, judging by his appearance and," sniffing, "yes, by his smell, is only a stable boy on the great Poole estate."

"I don't see," began Dick, puzzled, "what difference it makes who saved you so long as you were pulled out by somebody."

"It doesn't really make so much difference to me," she explained without elucidating, "as it does to my mother, who is the fisherman who stands upon the shore while I am the bait which is cast into the water."

Dick, being moderately stupid and a man anyway, did not comprehend then or later when he had plenty of time to think it all over. But perhaps his vision was clouded by the memory of her lips and her hair and her general golden desirability.

She had given him her hand when she had said good by, and something in her eyes had made him want to kiss it. The same thing said that she would not have minded. But he did not.

"I've never had so much fun in all my life," she told him at parting, "and I do like you."

"Will you be on moonlight."

"I ought not to."

"But I'll be lonely."

"Will you be here?"

"Yes."

"Then, I might," he feared to make furtl

SHE was in his excitement tonight he should be slashing dreamily at a magical setting?

Captain MacMurray and so did "North" a sober, moody fellow day he laughed at to pick up twigs fr

the year he had been pronounced a finished horseman by the exacting captain—and seemed to be in a hurry to get somewhere. "Northwest" entered into the spirit of things to the extent of pretending that he was a colt once more, and shied foolishly at every bit of paper or moving shadow they passed—a thing he hadn't done in six or seven years either.

Captain MacMurrie was frankly puzzled. He diagnosed the symptoms correctly but he could not imagine when and where the patient had been exposed to the contagion. It was Captain MacMurrie's job to know what Dick did with his time; not to spy exactly, but to be with him rather constantly and to share his occupation.

"Who is she?" the captain asked finally.

Dick reined in his horse as if a shot had whistled uncomfortably close to his ears. Then he laughed and because he was dying to talk about her he told his mentor the whole story. If his description of her was inadequate his very incoherence on the subject told the grizzled world adventurer more than a novelist's summary of her charms. Captain MacMurrie tried to remember back to that far day when he, too, had felt that suffocating reverence for a woman, that stifling impatience of the moments that lagged between the last and the next meeting with her. It made him almost sick to think how long ago it was and how impossible the divine rapture was to one who knew life's delusions and had lived through its snares.

Captain MacMurrie was now confronted by a nice problem. One of his duties was to report to his employer, Mr. Jonathan Poole, any symptoms of interest in the opposite sex which his son, Dick, might exhibit. So far that part of his contract had been easy of fulfillment. Clearly the letter of the understanding required that he now report posthaste the information of the movements of the enemy which had just come to his knowledge.

On the other hand, one of the mainsprings of his existence was love for Dick. No one who was with him constantly could help worshipping the unspoiled charm of the boy. Instinctively the old soldier knew that if the need ever arose he would unquestioningly die for his young disciple. He, Captain MacMurrie, was much more a parent to Dick than his own father, much more than most fathers are to their boys. He had more time; his one job in life was to love Dick.

And he realized that Dick was thrillingly happy for the first time in all his life, that nature had come along and said: "Here's the moment for which you have been saved, the reason why you have made your body the nice clean healthy mechanism that it is."

So it was with extreme distaste that he reviewed the conditions of his contract with the father which pointed the way to what his heart told him was rank treachery to the thing he loved most in life.

But Captain MacMurrie was a soldier. In him was ingrained the habit of obeying orders; just as he exacted obedience from those under him.

So, after dinner, he reported not very cheerfully to the library where Jonathan Poole had secluded himself. Briefly he outlined the situation.

The great man, for Jonathan Poole was a great man in politics as well as in finance, received the news without visible signs of emotion.

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Poole blinked a little at the sheer loveliness of it. Twenty years had passed since he had shut his eyes to the fact that the moon can sometimes transform the world into a fairyland that makes the heart ache.

IV

SHE came to him almost as soon as Dick himself arrived on the beach. Perhaps she had been waiting in the shadows until she saw him.

Except that his heart told him, Dick would not have recognized her. In her bathing clothes and in daylight she had seemed rather human somehow, but in the golden gossamer she was wearing now she couldn't be anything but an exquisite elf. She seemed much younger too than he had supposed, although he could not quite determine whether the length of her skirts, which came just below the knee, was due to extreme youth or to extreme modishness.

Still she seemed to have made up her mind as to why she was there. Quite simply, sweetly, she held up her lips for his kiss.

He touched her warm mouth lightly, reverently—at first.

"Adorable you," he whispered as he lifted her swiftly from the sands and carried her vibrant body to the beach pavilion where there were seats and shade in daytime for those who wished to watch the bathers.

After he had held her close for a time she finally pushed him away from her reluctantly; pushed away, that is, so she could talk, but remaining contentedly in his arms.

"This little hour of moonlight, dear," she whispered, "is all the moonlight we shall ever have together in all this world."

"Nonsense!" he protested practically. "It will be moonlight tomorrow night and for many nights after that."

"But I shall not be here—in your arms I mean. I shouldn't be here at all, should never even have spoken to you but I've made a bargain with myself—and maybe with God. I don't know. Just to be with you this one night I've traded all the rest of the nights there are. I've promised I'd never see you again. That's why I came to you so soon, why I kissed you right away. I knew we had only just so many seconds out of eternity and I did not want to waste a single one."

Dick sensed that she was sincere in her statement. She clung to him pathetically after she had made it and there were tears in her eyes when he kissed them. "Because you are the one I love," she murmured shyly before she offered her lips to him again.

"Now explain all this nonsense about not seeing me again, dear," he insisted finally. "I'll show you where you're all wrong."

"I've got to explain, I suppose," she began slowly. "But I hate to think of how you will despise me."

"Shoot." He held her just close enough so that she could breathe and speak without interfering with his consciousness that her heart and his were beating in unison like a couple of trip hammers. "You do the explaining and I'll provide whatever hating is necessary afterwards on condition that I don't have to let go of my grip to do it."

She laughed gentle appreciation but began: "In the first place I'm a thief. I had to steal everything I have given you, those kisses, this dress that I've let you muss all up; they all belong to some one else."

"To whom?" he demanded.

"To the man who will some day own the bench that we are sitting on, the very beach on which we met."

"Whom do you mean?"

"Stupid," she replied impatiently, "I mean the young man you will be working for yourself some day—Richard Poole."

"Oh!" He sat stunned, trying to comprehend the meaning of the astonishing statement she had just made. He understood, readily enough, that she did not know he was Richard Poole himself—it had been fun to let her think he was an underling that first day and he had not corrected her mistake—but just why her adorable kisses and her unmistakably expensive dress should belong to him save by right of conquest was more than his mind could fathom. He would have to wait, groping.

"The reason that I tell you this, which I have no right to do, is because I love you," she started off simply, "and because I trust you to keep my confidence safe in that boy heart of you that is beating so close to mine."

"In the first place my name is Rosalyn Winters, though I much prefer to be called 'dear' by you. Even Rosalyn isn't my real name because I was adopted by Mrs. Winters out of a foundlings' home seventeen years ago when I was only six months old. I

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"And when I finally told her what I'm going to confess to you, dear, she stood over me and called me terrible names—and even struck me."

have never really felt toward her as one should toward a mother, even an adopted one, but she has been very kind to me in her way, and in order to give me advantages she has gone without things herself. I've had a good education and enough nice things to know how to take care of myself. This spring she told me why.

"Everything that she has done for me, from the adoption on down to this very dress, was so that I should be able to take care of her when she grew old. She had no children of her own, her husband died the first year of their marriage, and she had a horror of being left alone and penniless. It was because she thought I promised to be good-looking that she chose me from among all the foundling babies in the first place, and she has done everything

in her power ever since to make me more attractive. She thinks she has succeeded."

Dick pressed her closer.

"Thanks for seeming to agree with her," she went on. "The way I am to repay her, Mrs. Winters says, is by marrying a rich man who can take care of us both. She finally picked on young Mr. Poole as the victim and brought me here and even figured out the scheme by which I was to pretend to drown off the beach of the Poole estate. She had heard that he usually bathed on this beach in the early morning and neither of us dreamed that I would really be saved by you, and certainly neither of us thought that I would immediately step up and hand my heart to an absolutely penniless boy like yourself.

(Continued on page 96)

Can a Woman of Sixty Win the Love of a Man

It is a question that is now on the lips of everyone who is reading this absorbing novel. And the answer begins to be disclosed in this instalment of—

DECEMBER LOVE

by Robert Hichens

Author of "The Garden of Allah," "Barbary Sheep," and "Bella Donna"

THROUGH Francis Braybrooke, a London clubman, Alick Craven meets Lady Sellingworth, now an elderly woman but still famous as a former reigning beauty. There is something about her which fascinates Craven, just as it has fascinated Beryl Van Tuyn, an American girl, a sculptress, whom Lady Sellingworth has taken up. Craven and Miss Van Tuyn seem determined to solve the mystery of why Lady Sellingworth suddenly—overnight, almost—gave up her position as a beauty and surrendered to old age. They knew that it had something to do with the theft, some years before, of her famous jewels, but they did not know that this theft came as the result of Lady Sellingworth's being lured to Paris by a mysterious bronzed man, who flattered the beauty's vanity by holding forth promise of a violent flirtation—and then craftily stole the jewels. This shock to her pride, more than the loss of the gems, opened Lady Sellingworth's eyes to her real character—and immediately London was buzzing with the news that she had given up to old age. But no one ever learns why. Beryl Van Tuyn, seeing Craven coming under the spell of the older woman's charm, jealousy tries to find out what that charm consists of, but all she succeeds in doing is to arouse the cynical scorn of her artist friend, Dick Garstin, who shrugs his shoulders. Then, in a bohemian café, Beryl notices a bronzed man of striking appearance, and is suddenly fascinated by him. Is this the same "bronzed man" who tricked Lady Sellingworth? A new element enters the story.

CRAVEN went away from Berkeley Square that night still under the spell and with a mind unusually vivid and alive. As he had told Lady Sellingworth, he was now twenty-nine and no longer considered himself young. There was something in the London atmosphere which he considered antagonistic to youth. He had felt much younger in Italy, especially when his ambassador had taken him to Posilipo in summer time. But that was all over now. It might be a long time before he was again attached to an embassy.

In the morning he of course felt different—one always feels

different in the morning—but nevertheless he was aware that something definite had come into his life which had made a change in it. This something was his acquaintance with Lady Sellingworth. Already he found it difficult to believe that he had lived for twenty-eight years without knowing her.

He was one of those rather unusual young men who feel strongly



W. H. HICHENS

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Half Her Age?

Illustrations by
W. D. Stevens

59



Suddenly Lady Sellingworth's manner changed. "Now what have you got on your mind?" she asked meaningly.

the vulgarity of their own time, and who have in them something which seems at moments to throw back into times of the past. They seemed to draw him in ignorance, and had for him something of the fascination which attaches to the unknown, and this fascination, or something akin to it, hung about Lady Sellingworth, and even about the house in which she dwelt.

He knew that he had never been in any house in London which he liked so much as he liked hers; that in no other London house had he ever felt so much at home, so almost curiously in place. And the lady of the house was ideally right in it. He wondered whether in the future he would often be there, whether Lady Sellingworth would allow him to be one of the few real intimates to whom her door was open. He hoped so. He believed so. But he was not quite certain about it. For there was something elusive about her, not insincere but just that—elusive. She might not care to see very much of him although he knew that she liked him. They had touched the fringe of intimacy on the preceding night.

After his work at the Foreign Office was over he walked to the club, and the first man he saw on entering it was Francis Braybrooke, just back from Paris. In a few minutes they were settled in two deep armchairs in a quiet corner and Craven was telling of his first visit to Berkeley Square.

"Wasn't I right?" said Braybrooke. "Could Adela Sellingworth ever be a back number? I think that was *your* expression."

Craven slightly reddened. "I was a—a young fool to use it."

"I fancy it's a newspaper phrase that has pushed its way somehow into the language."

"Vulgarity pushes its way in everywhere now. Braybrooke, I want to thank you very much for your introduction to Lady Sellingworth. You were right. She has a wonderful charm. It's a privilege for a young man as I am, I suppose, to know her. To be with her makes life seem more what it ought to be, what one wants it to be."

Braybrooke looked extremely pleased, almost touched.

"I am glad you appreciate her," he said. "It shows that real distinction has still a certain appeal. And so you met Beryl Van Tuyn there."

"Do you know her?"

Braybrooke raised his eyebrows.

"Know her? How should I not know her when I am constantly running over to Paris?"

"She seems very fond of Lady Sellingworth. She wants to get her over to Paris."

"Adela Sellingworth won't go."

"Why not?"

"She seems to hate Paris now. It is years since she has stayed there."

After a pause Craven said:

"Lady Sellingworth is something of a mystery, I think. I wonder—I wonder if she feels lonely in that big house of hers."

"Far more people feel lonely than seem lonely," said Braybrooke.

"I expect they do. But I think that somehow Lady Sellingworth seems lonely. And yet she is full of mockery."

"But didn't you find her very kind?"

"Oh, yes! I meant of self-mockery."

Braybrooke looked rather dubious.

"I think," continued Craven, perhaps a little obstinately, "that she looks upon herself with irony, while Miss Van Tuyn

looks upon others with irony. Perhaps, though, that is rather a question of the different outlooks of youth and age."

"H'm?"

Braybrooke pulled at his gray and brown beard.

"I scarcely see—I scarcely see, I confess, why age should be more disposed to self-mockery than youth. Age, if properly met and suitably faced—that is with dignity and self-respect—has no reason for self-mockery; whereas youth, although charming and delightful, might well laugh occasionally at its own foolishness."

"Ah, but it never does!"

"I think for once I shall have a cocktail," said Braybrooke, signing to an attendant in livery. "You will join me, Craven? Let it be dry Martinis—eh?—Yes, two dry Martinis."

As the attendant went away Braybrooke added:

"My dear boy, if you will excuse me for saying so, are you not getting the Foreign Office habit of being older than your years? I hope you will not begin wearing horn spectacles while your sight is still unimpaired."

Craven laughed and felt suddenly younger.

The two dry Martinis were brought and the talk grew a little more lively. Braybrooke, who seldom took a cocktail, was good enough to allow it to go to his head and became, for him, almost unbuttoned. Craven, entertained by his elderly friend's unwonted exuberance, talked more freely and a little more intimately to him than usual; and presently alluded to the events of the previous night, and described his expedition to Soho.

"Adela Sellingworth in Soho! Adela Sellingworth in the midst of such a society!" exclaimed the world's governess with unfeigned astonishment. "What could have induced her—but to be sure, Beryl Van Tuyn is famous for her escapades, and for bringing the most unlikely people into them. I remember once in Paris she actually induced Madame Marretti to go to—ah—ah!"

He pulled himself up short.

"These Martinis are surely very strong!" he murmured into his beard reproachfully. Then he added:

"How poor Adela Sellingworth must have hated it!"

"I don't think she did. Besides she has been to many of the Paris cafés. She told me so."

"It must have been a long time ago. And in Paris it is all so different. And you sat with them?"

Craven recounted the tale of the previous evening. When he came to the Café Royal suggestion, the world's governess looked really outraged.

"Adela Sellingworth at the Café Royal!" he said. "How could Beryl Van Tuyn! I—waiter, bring me two more dry Martinis, please."

"Yes, sir."

"I'm sure Lady Sellingworth feels terribly alone in that beautiful house," said Craven. "I know she does."

"Has she told you so?"

"Good heavens—no. But she never would."

"She need not be alone," observed Braybrooke. "She could have a companion tomorrow."

"I can't imagine her with a Fanny Cronin."

"I don't mean a *dame de compagnie*. I mean a husband." Craven's ardent blue eyes looked a question.

"Seymour Portman is always there waiting, and hoping."

"Sir Seymour?" cried Craven.

"Well, why not?" said Braybrooke, almost with severity. "Why not?"

"But his age!"

The world's governess, who was older than Sir Seymour, though not a soul knew it, looked more severe.

"His age would be in every way suitable to Adela Sellingworth," he said firmly.

"Oh, but——"

"Go on!"

"I can't see an old man like Sir Seymour as *her* husband. Oh, no! It wouldn't do. She would never marry such an old man. I am certain of that."

Braybrooke pinched his lips together and felt for his beard.

"I hope," he said, lifting and lowering his bushy eyebrows, "I hope at any rate she will never be so foolish as to marry a man who is what is called young. That would be a terrible mistake, both for her and for him. Now I really must be going. I am dining tonight rather early with—oh, by the way, it is with one of your chiefs, Eric Learington! We are going to some music afterwards at Queen's Hall. Good by. I'm very glad you realize Adela Sellingworth's great distinction and charm. But——" He paused, as if considering something carefully. Then he added:

"But don't forget that she and Seymour Portman would be perfectly suitable to one another. She is a delightful creature but she is no longer a young woman. But I need not tell you that."

And having thus done the needless thing he went away, walking with a certain unwonted self-consciousness which had source root solely in dry Martinis.

Craven realized that he had given himself away directly Braybrooke was gone. The two empty glasses stood on a low table in front of his chair. He looked at them and for an instant was filled with human anger against the mysterious mixture which composes a human being. To be immortal—he was old fashioned enough to believe surreptitiously in his own immortality—and yet to be defected from the straight path of good sense by a couple of dry Martinis! It was humiliating.

Braybrooke had certainly gone away thinking that he, Craven, had fallen in love with Lady Sellingworth. That thought, too, might possibly have come out of one of those little glasses, the one on the left. But nevertheless it would stick in Braybrooke's mind long after the Martinis were forgotten.

And what if it did?

Craven said that to himself, but he felt far less defiant than sensitively uncomfortable.

He was surprised by himself. Evidently he had not known his own feelings. When Braybrooke mentioned Seymour Portman as a suitable husband for Lady Sellingworth, something strong, almost violent, had risen up in Craven to protest. An odd sense of romance suddenly floated about him. Did that too come from those cursed dry Martinis?

But the odd sense of romance persisted when the effect of the dry Martinis must certainly have worn off. It was something such as Craven had never known, or even imagined before. He had had his little adventures; he had even had deeper, passionate episodes. But in all these episodes of the past there had been something very definitely physical, something almost horribly natural, a prompting of the body, the kind of thing which belongs to youth.

In this new episode he was emancipated from that. He was able to feel that he was peculiar if not unique. In the strong attraction which drew him towards Lady Sellingworth there was surely nothing of the—well, to himself he called it the medically physical.

When he got home from the club he found on his table a note from Beryl Van Tuyn:

Hyde Park Hotel
Thursday

My dear Mr. Craven:

What a pity you couldn't get away last night. But you were quite right to play Squire of Dames to our dear Lady Sellingworth. We had a rather wonderful evening after you had gone. Dick Garstin was in his best vein. Green chartreuse brings out his genius in a wonderful way. I wish it would do for me what it does for him. But I have tried it—in small doses—quite in vain. He and I walked home together and talked of everything under the stars.

Isn't dear Adela Sellingworth delightful? She looked like a wonderful antique in that Italian frame. I love every line in her face and would give my best bronze to have white hair like hers. But somehow I am almost glad she didn't fall to the Café Royal. She is right. It is too Georgian for her. She is, as she says, definitely Edwardian and would scarcely understand the new jargon which comes as easily as "how d'you do" to our lips.

By the way, coming out of the Café Royal last night I saw a living bronze.

Yours,
BERYL VAN TUYN.

This note half amused and half irritated Craven on a first reading. On a second reading irritation predominated in him. Miss Van Tuyn's determined relegation of Lady Sellingworth to the past seemed somehow to strike at him, to make him ridiculous; and her deliberate classing of him with herself in the underlined "*our*" seemed rather like an attempt to assert authority, the authority of youth, over him. But no doubt this was very natural. Craven was quite sure Miss Van Tuyn cared nothing about him, but she didn't choose to let an elderly woman take possession of him even for an hour without sharpening a weapon or two and bringing them into use.

No wonder that men are conceited when women so swiftly take up arms on their account!

For a moment Craven almost disliked Miss Van Tuyn, and made up his mind that there would be no next time for him in Soho while she was in London.



"If it is Mr. Craven," she said to the butler, "you may let him in. But admit no one else."

Was he putting on horn spectacles while his eyesight was still unimpaired? He felt doubtful, almost confused for a moment. Was his new feeling for Lady Sellingworth subtly pulling him away from his youth? Where was he going? Perhaps this new sensation of movement was only deceptive; perhaps he was not on the way to an unknown region. For a moment he wished that he could talk freely, openly, with some understanding friend, a man of course.

Already he began to realize the human ridicule which always attends upon any departure from what, according to the decision of all absolutely ordinary people, is strictly normal.

Everybody would understand and approve if he were to fall desperately in love with Beryl Van Tuyn; but if he were to prefer a great friendship with Lady Sellingworth to a love affair with her youthful and beautiful friend no one would understand, and everybody would be ready to laugh and condemn.

He knew this and yet he felt obstinate as he sat down to reply to Miss Van Tuyn's letter. It was only when he did this that he thought seriously about its last words.

Why had she troubled to write them down? Comparatively young though he was he knew that a woman's "by the way"



The door opened and Craven entered the room. Lady Sellingworth looked exactly

usually means anything rather than what it seems to mean, namely, a sentence thrown out by chance because it has just happened to turn up in the mind. A living bronze! He realized what a living bronze must mean when written of by a woman. Miss Van Tuyn had evidently seen an amazingly handsome man coming out of the Café Royal.

If Miss Van Tuyn intended to give a flick to his jealousy at the end of her letter she had failed. He wrote a little letter in answer to hers, charmingly polite, but rather vague about Soho. At the end of it he put: "I feel rather intrigued about the living bronze. Was it in petticoats or trousers?"

Craven had been right in his supposition about the world's governess. Braybrooke had gone away from the club that evening firmly persuaded that his young friend had done the almost unbelievable, had fallen in love with Adela Sellingworth. He was really perturbed about it. A tremulous sense of the fitness of things governed his whole life, presided, as it were, over all his actions and even over most of his thoughts.

When the effect of the two cocktails had subsided he tried to convince himself that he was giving way to undue anxiety, that there was really nothing in his suppositions except alcohol taken in the afternoon. But this effort failed. Life had taught him that practically nothing is impossible. He had known old men to

run—or rather to walk—off with young girls; he had known old women to be infatuated with mere boys; he had known well-born women to marry grooms and chauffeurs; a peer of his acquaintance had linked himself to a cabman's daughter and stuck to her; chorus girls of course perpetually married into the peerage; human passions—although he couldn't understand it—ran as wild as the roots of eucalyptus trees planted high within reach of water. So he could not rule out as impossible a sudden affection for Adela Sellingworth in the heart of young Craven. It was really very unfortunate. Feeling responsible he thought perhaps he ought to do something discreetly. The question was—what?

Beryl Van Tuyn came into his mind.

As he had told Craven he knew her quite well and knew all about her. She came of an excellent American family in Philadelphia. She was the only child of parents who couldn't get on together, and who were divorced. Both her father and mother had married again. Her father gave her an ample allowance. Her mother had long ago unearthed Fanny Cronin from some lair in Philadelphia to be her official companion.

Beryl Van Tuyn would be just the wife for young Craven when she had settled down. She was too independent, too original, too daring and far too unconventional for Braybrooke's way of thinking. But he believed her to be really quite all right.



as usual—casual, indifferent—but within herself she was all one turmoil.

Modern Americans held views about personal liberty which were not at all his, but that didn't mean that they were not entirely respectable. Beryl Van Tuyn was clever, beautiful, had plenty of money. As a diplomatist's wife, when she had settled down, she would be quite in her element. After some anxious thought he decided that it was his duty to try to pull strings.

On the following day he considered it his social duty to pay a call at No. 4-A Berkeley Square. Dear Adela Sellingworth would certainly wish to know how things were going in Paris.

When Braybrooke came into the big drawing room on the first floor, he fancied that his friend was looking older, and even paler, than usual. As he took her hand he thought: "Can I be right? Is it possible that Craven can imagine himself in love with her?"

It was an uncomplimentary thought, and he tried to put it from him as singularly unsuitable, and indeed almost outrageous at this moment, but it wouldn't go. It defied him and stuck firmly in his mind. In his opinion Adela Sellingworth was the most truly distinguished woman in London. But that she should attract a young man, almost indeed a boy, in *that* way! It did really seem utterly impossible.

In answer to his inquiry Lady Sellingworth acknowledged that she had not been feeling very well during the last two days.

"Perhaps you have been doing too much," he suggested.

The mocking look came into her eyes.

"But what do I ever do now?" she said. "I lie quietly on my shelf. That surely can't be very exhausting."

"No one would ever connect you with being laid on the shelf," said Braybrooke. "Your personality forbids that. Besides I hear that you have been having quite a lively time. I happened to meet young Craven at the club, and he told me of your excursion into Bohemia."

"Bohemia!" she said. "I haven't set foot in that entertaining country since I gave up my apartment in Paris."

"Well, Craven was enthusiastic about the evening; said it was like a bit of Italy. You know he was once at the embassy in Rome?"

"Yes. He told me so."

"I hear very good accounts of him from the Foreign Office. Eric Learington speaks very well of him. He ought to rise high in his career. By the way, he seems tremendously taken with Miss Van Tuyn."

As the world's governess said this he let his small hazel eyes fix themselves rather intently on Lady Sellingworth's face. He saw no change of expression there. She still looked tired but casual, neither specially interested nor in the least bored. Her brilliant eyes still held their slightly mocking expression.

"And so you think Beryl would suit him?"

"It just occurred to me. I wouldn't say more than that. I have a horror of matchmaking."

"Of course. Like all of us! Well you may be right. She seemed to like him. You don't want me to do anything, I suppose?"

"Oh, no—no!" he exclaimed, with almost unnecessary earnestness, and looking even slightly embarrassed. "I only wished to know your opinion. I value your opinion so very highly."

Suddenly Lady Sellingworth changed her manner. She leaned forward towards the world's governess, smiled at him, and said, half satirically, half confidentially:

"Now what is it you have at the back of your mind?"

Braybrooke was slightly taken back.

"I really don't think—" he began.

"You and I are old friends. Do tell me."

He certainly had not come intending to be quite frank, and this sudden attack rather startled him.

"You have formed some project," she continued. "I know it. Now let me guess what it is."

"But I assure you—"

"You have found some one who you think would suit Beryl as a husband. Isn't that it?"

"Well, I don't know. I confess it had just occurred to me that with her beauty, her cleverness, and her money—for one has to think of money in these difficult days—she would be a very desirable wife for a rising ambitious man."

"No doubt. And who is he?"

It was against all Braybrooke's instincts to burst out abruptly into the open. He scarcely knew what to do. But he was sufficiently sharp to realize that Lady Sellingworth already knew the answer to her question. So he made a virtue of necessity and replied:

"It had merely occurred to me, after noting young Craven's enthusiasm about her beauty and cleverness, that he might suit her very well. He must marry and marry well if he wishes to rise high in the diplomatic career."

"I don't think I have an opinion," she said. "Beryl would be a brilliant wife for any man. Mr. Craven seems a very pleasant boy. They might do admirably together. Or they might both be perfectly miserable. I can't tell. Now do tell me about Paris."

When Braybrooke left Berkeley Square that day he remembered having once said to Craven that Lady Sellingworth was interested in everything that was interesting except in love affairs; that she didn't seem to care about love affairs. And he had a vague feeling of having perhaps, for once, done the wrong thing.

When he had gone, and she was once more alone, Lady Sellingworth made up the fire again, though it didn't really need mending. Then she stood beside it with one narrow foot resting on the low fender, holding her black dress up a little with her left hand.

Men and women may not know themselves thoroughly, but they usually know very well whether they have finally got the better of a once dominating tendency or vice, or whether there is still a possibility of their becoming again its victim. In complete victory there is a knowledge which nothing can shake from its throne. That knowledge Lady Sellingworth had never possessed. She hoped but she did not know. For sometimes, though very seldom, the old wildness seemed to stir within her like a serpent uncoiling itself after its winter sleep. Then she was frightened and made a great effort, an effort of fear. She set her heel on the serpent and after a time it lay still.

Sometimes, too, the loneliness of her life in her spacious and beautiful house became almost intolerable to her. This was especially the case at night. She did not care to show a haggard and lined face and white hair to her world when it was at play. And though she had defied the Old Guard she did not love meeting all those women whom she knew so well, and who looked so much younger and gayer than she did. So she had many lonely evenings at home, when her servants were together below stairs, and she had for company only the fire and a book.

The dinner in Soho had been quite an experience for her, and though she had taken it so simply and casually, had seemed so thoroughly at home and in place with her feet on the sanded floor eating to the sound of guitars, she had really been inwardly excited. And when she had looked up and seen Craven gazing towards her she had felt an odd thrill at the heart. Something within her, no doubt woman's instinct, scented danger.

Braybrooke's visit had disturbed her. She had known him for years and knew the type of man he was, careful, discreet, but often very busy. He had a kind heart, but a brain which sometimes wove little plots. On the whole he was a sincere man, except of course sometimes socially, but now and then he found it

necessary to tell little lies. Had he told her a little lie that day about young Craven and Beryl Van Tuyn?

His remarks about Craven had interested her because she was interested in Craven, but it was not quite clear to her why Braybrooke should suddenly concentrate on the young man's future, nor why he should, with so much precaution, try to get at her opinion on the question of Craven's marriage. He seemed to think he was almost responsible for the young man. There had been even something furtive in his demeanor when speaking about Craven to her.

What had it to do with her whether Craven married Beryl Van Tuyn or did not marry her? Why should he marry at all? And if he must, why Beryl Van Tuyn?

Lady Sellingworth hated the thought of that marriage, and the idea that Braybrooke was probably intent on trying to bring it about roused in her resentment against him.

"Tiresome old man!" she said to herself, as she stood by the fire. "Why won't he let things alone? What business is it of his?" And then she felt as if Braybrooke were meditating a stroke against her and had practically asked her to help him in delivering the blow.

She felt that definitely. And immediately she had felt it, she was startled, and the strong sensation of being near to danger took hold on her.

In all the ten years which had passed since the theft of her jewels she had never once deliberately stretched out her hands to happiness. Palliatives she had made the most of; compensations she had been thankful for. She had been very patient and, considering what she had been, very humble. But she had definitely given up the thought of ever knowing again any intimate personal happiness. That book was closed. In ten years she had never once tried to open it.

And now, suddenly, without even being definitely conscious of what she was doing, she had laid her hands on it, as if—

The change in her, the abrupt and dangerous change, had surely come about two nights ago. And she felt now that something peculiar in Craven, rather than something unusual in herself, had caused it.

Beryl Van Tuyn and she were friends because the girl had professed a cult for her. Beryl had amused her. She had even been interested in Beryl because she had noted in her certain traits which had once been predominant in herself. And how she had understood Beryl's vanity, Beryl's passion for independence and love of the unconventional! Although they were so different, of different nations and different breeds, there was something which made them akin. And recognizing it she had sometimes felt a secret pity and even fear for the girl, thinking of the inevitable fading of that beauty, of the inevitable exasperation of that vanity with the passing of the years. The vanity would grow and the beauty would diminish as time went on. And then, some day, what would Beryl be?

Craven had interested and pleased Lady Sellingworth at once. She hardly knew why. There was something about him, about his look, bearing and manner which was sympathetic to her. She had felt glad that he had come to her house, had felt a quiet inclination to know more of him. That was all.

And then had come the night in Soho. And there for the first time since they had known each other she had felt herself to be subtly involved in a woman's obscure conflict with Beryl Van Tuyn. She was not conscious of having taken up weapons. Nevertheless she had no doubt about the conflict. And on her side any force brought into play against her beautiful friend must have issued simply from her personality, from some influence, perhaps from some charm, which she had not deliberately used. At least she thought she was being sincere with herself in telling herself that.

Craven had been the cause of the conflict, and certainly he had been fully aware of Beryl Van Tuyn's part in it. And he had shown quiet determination, willfulness even. At first she had thought that perhaps it had been prompted by chivalry, by something charmingly old-fashioned, and delicately gentlemanly in Craven. Later on she had been glad, intimately, warmly glad, to be quite sure that something more personal had guided him in his conduct that night.

He had simply preferred her company to the company of Beryl Van Tuyn. She was woman enough to rejoice in that fact. It was even rather wonderful to her. And it had given Craven a place in her estimation which no one had had for ten years.

She had loved his defiance. When he had flatly told her he did not intend to go back to the Café Royal she had felt thankful to him—just that. She had not had the heart to leave him on her doorstep.

(Continued on page 142)



What's the Matter With You American Parents?

asks

ELINOR GLYN



Elinor
Glyn

THE condition in America today in regard to the young people, and especially the young girls and women, is very disquieting, and does not look as though it were improving. And the thing is of national importance, for the young girls are the potential mothers of the coming generation—and what race can stand against the ravages of a set of incompetent and inconsequent mothers?

And now parents, listen! For the trouble of today is all your fault—you have betrayed the trust which a divine power placed in you. You are as kings who have abdicated their thrones; they cannot return at their own pleasure, but must be reelected by the people. And the youth of today is hardly likely voluntarily to restore authority to its parents.

About fifty years ago a new wave came over the civilized world, a sort of humanitarianism. There was a swing of the pendulum after what is known as the Early Victorian discipline

and prudery, which was quite as strongly felt in America as in the country in which Queen Victoria reigned. People began to think that there should be more freedom for everyone—and especially for children, who should develop along whatever lines their fancies moved them. That was the spirit of that time, and it produced the mothers and fathers of the rising generation of today.

It is simply ridiculous to deplore the present and praise the past. Each age has its advance and its good, only wisdom studies the result of the spirit of past ages, and uses this knowledge to assist in guiding the present spirit aright.

It was because the pendulum was allowed to swing too far the other way with the parents of the immediate generation that they lost their sense of balance, and could not see that the delightful freedom and want of restriction that they themselves had enjoyed could go to excess, and do more harm than the over-rigid

What's the Matter With You American Parents?

discipline their own parents had lived under. Every circumstance aided. Effort is always fatiguing; it was easier to let be. Inventions made life much simpler; quantities of books brought new ideas; automobiles enabled people to get about and see more places; declining belief in orthodox religion left the minds free to speculate—and a general sense of running wild invaded every point of view. So that the main issue, which animals never forget, was lost sight of by human parents; they let their offspring fend for themselves morally during the only age when any indelible sense of the fitness of things can be impressed upon them.

Birds and beasts, up to the period when their offspring are trained to take care of themselves, show the tenderest love and devotion and self-sacrifice. I am sure if we could understand the language of birds, for instance, we should hear the mother bird giving counsel to her brood how to fly from the nest, how to avoid danger, and how to seek food.

But human beings, who have been granted free will, use it in self-indulgence very often, and have sunk far beneath the animals in a sense of duty to their children. They are as entirely to blame for the present state of things as the master of a pack of hounds would be if the dogs were untrained and insubordinate.

What does a garden look like if seeds are just popped into the ground and allowed to come up as they please? It looks an untidy mess—possibly picturesque, but able only to produce mediocre blossoms, which after a year or two of this treatment run to wild weeds again.

Think of the impossible American children who are the pest of every summer hotel—running round, interrupting conversations, hearing and knowing everything, making smart repartees, showing neither politeness to other guests nor respect to their own parents. The tiny little girls staying up to the dances and jazzing with imps of boys until long after sensible bed hours! One simply runs from these "cute" monstrosities, whenever one can. The parents, generally proud of their precocious sayings, never seem to correct them, or realize the bores they are to everyone else.

The mothers allow pert answers at table and openly tell their friends the smart things their girls and boys have said. The children hear this and delight in going still further. They are now quite intelligent enough to understand when they are being "cute," and they exploit this faculty. A mother bored everyone to death at a tea the other day in recounting the spicy and knowing criticism her little Helen gave forth over her aunt's divorce. Helen in a corner supposed to be showing a lady some photographs, heard all this and sniggered consciously. This is just one of hundreds of cases which must be known to everyone of the way children are allowed to grow up now.

From earliest infancy should be taught a sense of values, a sense of personal responsibility. And above all the highest self-respect. If the necessity for acquiring self-respect were drummed into their ears from the beginning, and why it is necessary, so as to carry on by and by for great things, it would become a habit by the time the children are ten or twelve, and the subconscious mind would be indelibly impressed with the idea. Responsibility to the community—explanation that they have no right to impose their selfish desires and so make others uncomfortable. Explana-

tion of the importance of acting rightly, of the value of refinement and good manners.

What respect can little Lola of five have for a mother of twenty-five, who spends her entire time in search of amusement, or in bickering with her mate, and in indulging Lola's every caprice and laughing at her forwardness, even if by five the poor child has not a new "father" to reckon with—since it is always the American woman who can obtain the divorce, and custody of the children, no matter whose fault the break may have been. So it is a set of new "fathers" the children receive far more often than new "mothers"—and even if the law allows them to spend half the year with the real parent—the atmosphere must be very disillusioning to all the budding ideas of fidelity, or the sanctity of the marriage tie.

A mother—unless she is rich enough to have her children taken care of in the European way—no matter how devoted and thoughtful for their good she may be—knows that they will have to run the gauntlet of the big mixed high school, where she will be powerless to protect them from hearing many things she would rather they were unconscious of.

Then it is all the more important that she molds character, teaches discrimination, and polishes the critical faculties when she has the little ones with her—as a good armorer sent out the knights of old well equipped for the battle. That is the parents' business, to convince the sharp brains of their offspring that it is the best policy to cultivate those fundamental virtues and characteristics which never can alter while humanity inhabits the earth.

Customs alter, each age changes the spirit of the time, but these outward things do not matter. What does matter are the basic qualities—just as a divinely beautiful human form still remains divinely beautiful decked with the different fashions of all the ages, but only ceases to be lovely when these fashions and customs cause deformity in the structure, as in the case of the Chinese lady's feet, or the wretched, bent backs of some of the peasant women of those countries where women do the hard work.

Then is the time to ponder, and prune the customs and fashions which are destroying the form. And that is what has happened to modern America. She has allowed deformities of spirit to take place in the rising generation, quite as mutilating to the structure as the cramping of the Chinese lady's feet. And all because the parents have been too weak, or too self-indulgent, or too stupid to realize that it is their business to train the minds of their children at an age when they will listen, and show them an example which they can follow with benefit.

The improvement in the girls over fifteen must be left to themselves. They are beyond the parents' reach now, but what bent the little ones may take is yet in the hands of their mothers. Anything taught a child in extreme youth is drummed into the head diligently. People do not forget how to read or write, for instance, even in old age, and if the same assiduity was employed in teaching self-respect in childhood, the grown mind would be inexorably governed by the principle it had thus been saturated with in its incubating stage. If the belief in the importance of keeping pure the soul, as to give it back to God



Is this the sort of "attractiveness" we want our American girls to pattern after?



In the dressing room at fashionable dances there is almost always a maid, ready instantly with rouge, lipstick, eyebrow pencil and powders—scratching matches for the girls' cigarettes and taking care of their corsets, which they remove before going in to dance.

untarnished at death, does not operate in a family—and alas! the spiritual side is sadly in the background now—at least personal gain and success should be the driving power.

All parents should examine ruthlessly their *aims*. What do they really *want* for their children? Nine-tenths would answer truly their success and happiness. Well then, do not drift along but each day endeavor to think what *means* will procure these good things. They won't drop into your mouths! You must use effort. Train Jane and Johnnie to think—to observe what is worth while. Put before them an ideal to strive for.

If the mother is quarreling with her husband—and the father is soaking in alcohol, even in these prohibition days—won't Jane and Johnnie know it and despise both parents with that ruthlessness and want of sympathy which are the attributes of youth?

It is the mother's duty to have trained Jane from infancy to believe in her own purity, and her own dignity, to reverence fine things, to seek some great ideal. It is the mother's duty to explain that the sex instinct is an instinct given for one purpose—the recreation of the human species—and should be guarded and exalted and ennobled, and not sunk down to degradation, and that it should never be cheapened by tawdry imitation, as when Jane lets herself be mauled and kissed by every boy she has grown up with—going as far as she thinks prudent, and even in some cases not stopping there!

I would like to speak of the spiritual side, but I feel that as this is not an essay upon religion, it might be quite unacceptable, and we had better stick to material aspects and everyday sense. Though once the spiritual is awakened then the material following is the elevation of the physical. The spiritual is the horse and the physical the cart.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and in judging of a subject in its broad or national sense, one can only regard the majority. The majority of the young in this glorious country seem to be going on an ugly road.

What kind of thoughts can children of eight or ten, or older, up to fourteen and seventeen even, have when they see their parents divorcing? Often they have been sharp enough to understand that this is only a tricking of the law; so how much the more must their subconscious minds be imbued with contempt for both parents? If the girls see the mother leading an idle, useless life, the victim of some habit—drug or cigarette or bridge—or killing time in some other aimless way, what is likely, in logic,

to be their point of view? That to get pleasure while youth lasts is the best aim. Or if the mother is a good unselfish woman, in a less fortunate grade of society, and is slaving all day so that her girls may dress and go out and indulge in pleasure, how can the minds of these spoilt children be impressed with any idea but that mother is a poor creature of no account, a dear old fool at best?

Never forget that you are responsible always for the impression that you have given of yourself to *those who know you well*, and so what they think of you, or how they value you, is entirely up to you. With strangers, it is different; they take impressions, often the reflections of their own minds, and not the truth at all. So that people have the most absurd reputations not deserved in the least one way or another. But in *the home*, the truth about each one's character is known to all the inmates. Camouflaged by love, very often, but subconsciously understood.

A mother who is put aside and her wishes not respected; a father who is deceived and disregarded—each has no one else to blame but herself or himself for using the wrong methods to inspire obedience and reverence. The very boys and girls who scoff at their parents very possibly obey to the last iota the will of some teacher or friend—good or bad—who has made his or her authority felt.

Punishments are no use. An appeal to the personal gain when children are very young, and then an explanation of the moral upliftment later, which comes of right thinking and right acting are the only methods to use.

Intelligence among the large masses is at a higher level than ever in the world's history; therefore, it is only by appealing to, and convincing, the intelligence as to the advantage to be secured mentally and physically by encouraging self-respect, and decency, that a regeneration can be begun.

A mother said to me the other day: "I don't know where Madge is this evening. I fear she has gone alone to dinner at —" mentioning a very rowdy dancing restaurant, "with Jack, Mary's husband, you know. I am so worried about it."

"Why did you let her go?" I asked.

"Of course, I could not help it. She pays no attention to me."

I was not surprised, for this woman's life is one long vista of self-indulgence; shirking all her duties, eating too much and then worrying over her fat; drinking cocktails and resenting her indigestion; smoking all day and complaining of her nerves—dressing, undressing, playing bridge!

(Continued on page 94)

Cassidy Pays *His Bet*

It was Corporal Cassidy of the Royal Northwest Mounted—and his greeting was brief: "Watch yourself, McKay. If I see you—I fire!"



Illustrations by Walt Louderback

THERE was a creeping restlessness in the warm September night. It was like the ghostly pulse of a great living body, still for a time, then moving, hiding, whispering between the dark clouds in the sky and the deeper shadowed earth below. A night of uneasiness, of unseen forces chained and stifled, of impending doubt and oppressive lifelessness. There was no wind, yet under the stars gray masses of cloud sped as if in flight; there was no breeze in the tree tops, yet they whispered and sighed. In the strange spell of this midnight, heavy with its unrest, the Canadian wilderness lay half asleep, half awake, with the mysterious stillness of death enshrouding it.

At the edge of the white sands of Wollaston, whose broad water was like oil tonight, stood the teepees of Yellow Bird's people. Smoke-blackened and seasoned by wind and rain they were dark blotches sentineling the shore of the big lake. Behind them, beyond the willows, were the Indian dogs. From them came an occasional whine, a deep sigh, the snapping of a jaw and in the gloom their bodies moved restlessly. In the teepees was the spell of this same unrest. Sleep was never quite sure

of itself. Men, women and little children twisted and rolled, or lay awake, and weird and distorted shapes and fancies came in dreams.

In the tepee of Slim Buck, chief of the tribe, Yellow Bird lay with her big dark eyes wide open, staring at the gray blur of the smoke hole above her. Her husband was asleep. Sun Cloud, the little beauty of the Crees, tossing on her blankets, had flung one of her long black braids so that it lay across her mother's breast. Yellow Bird's slim fingers played with its silken strands as she looked straight up into nothingness. Wide awake, she was thinking—thinking as Slim Buck would never be able to think, back to the days when a white woman had been her goddess, and when a little white boy—the woman's son—had called Yellow Bird "my fairy."


In the gloom, with foreboding eating at her heart, Yellow Bird's red lips parted in a smile as those days came back to her, for they were pleasing days to think about. But after that the years sped swiftly in her mind until the day when the little boy—a man grown—came to save her tribe, and her own life, and the life of Sun Cloud, and of Slim Buck her husband. Since then

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Up through the silent North Woods of dark shadows and blue lakes Jolly Roger McKay and the faithful Peter match wits with the law in the game of death—in this thrilling story of "*The Country Beyond*"

by

JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD



Yellow Bird sat up, her little hands clenched about the thick braid of Sun Cloud's hair. For two days and three nights she had conjured with the spirits and had let the soul go out of her body that she might learn the future for Neekewa, her white brother. And they had told her that Roger McKay had done right to kill.

Their voices had whispered to her that he would not suffer more than he had already suffered, that he would not be hanged by the neck until he was dead, that the law would never get him—and that in the Country Beyond he would find Nada the white girl, and happiness, and peace. Yellow Bird did not disbelieve. Her faith was illimitable. The spirits would not lie, and they had told her the truth. But the unrest of the night was eating at her heart. She tried to lift herself to the whisperings above the tepee top. But they were unintelligible, like many voices mingling, and with them came a dull fear into her soul.

She put out a hand, as if to rouse Slim Buck. Then she drew it back, and placed Sun Cloud's braid away from her. She rose to her feet so quietly that even in their restlessness they did not fully awake. Through the tepee door she went, and stood up straight in the night, as if now she might hear more clearly, and understand.

For a space she breathed in the oppressive something that was in the air, and her eyes went east and west for sign of storm. But there was no threat of storm. The clouds were drifting slowly and softly, with starlight breaking through their rifts, and there was no moan of thunder or wail of wind far away.

Her heart, for a little, seemed to stop its beating, and her hands clasped tightly at her breast. She began to understand, and a strange thrill crept into her. The spirits had put a great burden upon the night so that it might drive sleep from her eyes. They were warning her. They were telling her of danger, approaching swiftly, almost impending. And it was peril for the white man who was sleeping somewhere near.

Swiftly she began seeking for him, her naked little brown feet making no sound in the soft white sands of Wollaston.

And as she sought, the clouds thinned out above, and the stars shone through more clearly, as if to make easier for her the quest in the gloom.

prosperity and happiness had been her lot. The spirits had been good. They had not let her grow old, but had kept her still beautiful. And Sun Cloud, her little daughter, was beautiful, and Slim Buck was more than ever her god among men, and her people were happy. And all this she owed to the man who was sleeping under the gloom of the sky outside, the hunted man, the outlaw, "the little boy grown up"—who was known from one end of the Northland to the other as Jolly Roger McKay.

As she listened, and stared up at the smoke hole, strange spirits were whispering to her, and Yellow Bird's blood ran a little faster and her eyes grew bigger and brighter in the darkness. They seemed to be accusing her. They told her it was because of her that Roger McKay had come in that winter of starvation and death, and had robbed and almost killed, that she and Slim Buck and little Sun Cloud might live. That was the beginning, and the thrill of it had got into the blood of Neekewa, her "little white brother grown up." And now he was out there, alone with his dog in the night—and the red-coated avengers of the law were hunting him. They wanted him for many things, but chiefly for the killing of a man.

Where he had made his bed of blankets in the sand, close beside a flat mass of water-washed sandstone, Jolly Roger McKay, the outlaw, lay half asleep. Peter, his dog, was wide awake. Through the brush of Airedale whiskers that covered his homely face from the tip of his nose to his crown Peter's eyes gleamed brightly and watchfully. His lank and bony body, inherited from his Mackenzie hound mother, was tense and alert. He did not whine or snap his jaws, as he heard the Indian dogs occasionally making sound. The comradeship of a fugitive, ever on the watch for his fellow men, had made him silent and velvet-footed, and had sharpened his senses to the keenness of knives. He, too, felt the impelling force of an approaching menace in this night of stillness and mystery, and he watched closely the restless movements of his master's body, and listened with burning eyes to the name which he had spoken three times in the last five minutes of his sleep.

It was Nada's name, and as Jolly Roger cried it out softly in the old way, as if Nada was standing before them, Peter forgot his new friendship for little Sun Cloud, and a great yearning filled him. He sniffed the still air in the direction of Cragg's Ridge, a thousand miles away, and the desire pulled at him to get up,

and go back over all that trail until he came again to the brown-haired, blue-eyed little goddess he and Jolly Roger had worshiped.

And Jolly Roger, in his restless sleep, had gone over the old fight again—his last flight from the law, his coming at last to the edge of civilization, where he had found safety in the old cabin near the swamp, and where had come the dawning of that wonderful day when he had met Nada at the foot of Cragg's Ridge. After that, even in the unrest of his slumber, he was in paradise, while Peter watched and waited—a paradise of weeks and months in which love and glory and new faith and hope were born in the hearts of a girl and a man. And then he was living again the black night of wind and storm when Jed Hawkins lay dead in the trail to Mooney's cabin, as a penalty for attempting to drag Nada to a thing worse than death. And after that Nada was entreating him to take her with him, pleading that she might become a fugitive with him, and he was putting her away—telling her it was impossible—that eventually the law would get him—and hang him—and that he would be no better than Jed Hawkins if he allowed himself to sacrifice her.

With a moaning cry he reached out for her, and his hands struck the sandstone rock. His eyes opened, and slowly he sat up. The sky had cleared of clouds, and there was starlight, and in that starlight Jolly Roger saw a figure standing near him in the sand. At first he thought it was Sun Cloud, for Peter stood with his head raised to her. Then he saw it was Yellow Bird, with her beautiful eyes looking at him steadily and strangely as he awakened.

He got upon his feet and went to her, and took one of her hands. It was cold. He felt the shiver that ran through her slim body, and suddenly her eyes swept from him out into the night.

"Listen, Neekewa!"

Her fingers tightened in his hand. For a space he could hear the beating of her heart.

"Twice I have heard it," she whispered then. "Neekewa, you must go!"

"Heard what?" he asked.

She shook her head.

"Something—I don't know what. But it tells me there is danger. And I saw danger over the tepee top, and I have heard whisperings of it all about me. It is coming. It is coming slowly and cautiously. It is very near. Hark, Neekewa! Was that not a sound out on the water?"

"I think it was the wing of a duck, Yellow Bird."

"And that!" she cried swiftly, her fingers tightening still more.

"That sound—as if wood strikes on wood!"

"The croak of a loon far up the shore, Yellow Bird."

She drew her hand away.

"Neekewa, listen to me," she importuned him in Cree. "The spirits have made this night heavy with warning. I could not sleep. Sun Cloud twitches and moans. Slim Buck whispers to himself. You were crying out the name of Nada—Oo-Mee the Pigeon—when I came to you. I know. It is danger. It is very near. And it is danger for you."

"And only a short time ago you were confident happiness and peace were coming to me, Yellow Bird," reminded Jolly Roger. "The spirits, you said, promised the law should never get me, and I would find Nada again in that strange place you called the Country Beyond. Have the spirits changed their message, because the night is heavy?"

Yellow Bird's eyes were staring into darkness.

"No, they have not changed," she whispered. "They have spoken the truth. They want to tell me more, but for some reason it is impossible. They have tried to tell me where lies this place they call the Country Beyond—where you will again find Oo-Mee the Pigeon. But a cloud always comes between. And they are trying to tell me what the danger is off there—in the darkness." Suddenly she caught his arm. "Neekewa, did you hear?"

"A fish leaping in the still water, Yellow Bird."

He heard a low whimper in Peter's throat, and looking down he saw Peter's muzzle pointing toward the thick cloud of gloom over the lake.

"What is it, Pied-Bot?" he asked.

Peter whimpered again.

Jolly Roger touched the cold hand that rested on his arm.

"Go back to your bed, Yellow Bird. There is only one danger for me—the red-coated police. And they do not travel in the dark hours of a night like this."

"They are coming," she replied. "I cannot hear or see, but they are coming!"

Her fingers tightened.

"And they are near," she cried softly.

"You are nervous, Yellow Bird," he said, thinking of the two days and three nights of her conjuring, when she had neither slept nor taken food, that she might more successfully commune with the spirits. "There is no danger. The night is a hard one for sleep. It has frightened you."

"It has warned me," she persisted, standing as motionless as a statue at his side. "Neekewa, the spirits do not forget. They have not forgotten that winter when you came, and my people were dying of famine and sickness—when I dreaded to see little Sun Cloud close her eyes even in sleep, fearing she would never open them again. They have not forgotten how all that winter you robbed the white people over on the Des Chenes, that we might live. If they remember those things, and lie, I would not be afraid to curse them. But they do not lie."

Jolly Roger McKay did not answer. Deep down in him that strange something was at work again, compelling him to believe Yellow Bird. She did not look at him, but in her low Cree voice, soft as the mellow notes of a bird, she was saying:

"You will be going very soon, Neekewa, and I shall not see you again for a long time. Do not forget what I have told you. And you must believe. Somewhere there is this place called the Country Beyond. The spirits have said so. And it is there you will find your Oo-Mee the Pigeon—and happiness. But if you go back to the place where you left the Pigeon when you fled from the red-coated men of the law, you will find only blackness and desolation. Believe, and you shall be guided. If you disbelieve—"

She stopped.

"You heard that, Neekewa? It was not the wing of a duck, nor was it the croak of a loon far up the shore, or a fish leaping in the still water. *It was a paddle!*"

In the star-gloom Jolly Roger McKay bowed his head, and listened.

"Yes, a paddle," he said, and his voice sounded strange to him. "Probably it is one of your people returning to camp, Yellow Bird."

She turned toward him, and stood very near. Her hands reached out to him. Her hair and eyes were filled with the velvety glow of the stars, and for an instant he saw the tremble of her parted lips.

"Good by, Neekewa," she whispered.

And then, without letting her hands touch him, she was gone. Swiftly she ran to Slim Buck's tepee, and entered, and very soon she came out again with Slim Buck beside her. Jolly Roger did not move, but watched as Yellow Bird and her husband went down to the edge of the lake, and stood there, waiting for the strange canoe to pass—or come in. It was approaching. Slowly it came up, an indistinct shadow at first, but growing clearer, until at last he could see the silhouette of it against the star-silvered water beyond. There were two people in it. Before the canoe reached the shore Slim Buck stood out knee-deep in the water and hailed it.

A voice answered. And at the sound of that voice Jolly Roger McKay dropped like a loon far up the shore, and Peter's lips curled up, and he snarled. His master's hand warned him, and together they slipped back into the shadows, and from under a piece of canvas Jolly Roger dragged forth his pack, and quietly strapped it over his shoulders while he waited and listened.

And then, as he heard the voice again, he grinned, and chuckled softly.

"It's Cassidy, Pied-Bot! We can't lose that red-headed fox, can we?"

A good-humored devilry lay in his eyes, and Peter—looking up—thought for a moment his master was laughing. Then Jolly Roger made a megaphone of his hands, and called very clearly out into the night,

"Ho, Cassidy! Is that you, Cassidy?"

Peter's heart was choking him as he listened. He sensed a terrific danger. There was no sound at the edge of the lake. There was no sound anywhere. For a few moments a death-like stillness followed Jolly Roger's words.

Then a voice came in answer, each word cutting the gloom with the decisive clearness of a bullet coming from a gun.

"Yes, this is Cassidy—Corporal Terence Cassidy, of 'M' Division, Royal Northwest Mounted Police. Is that you, McKay?"

"Yes, it's me," replied Jolly Roger. "Does the wager still hold, Cassidy?"

"It holds."

There was shadowy movement on the beach. The voice came again,

"Watch yourself, McKay. If I see you—I shall fire!"



Everything was a blur before Jolly Roger's eyes. He had shot to kill—and he could not have missed.

With drawn gun Cassidy rushed toward the spot where Jolly Roger and Peter had stood. It was empty now, except for the bit of old canvas. Cassidy's Indian came up and stood behind him, and for many minutes they listened for the crackling of brush. Slim Buck joined them, and last came Yellow Bird, her dark eyes glowing like pools of fire in their excitement. Cassidy looked at her, marveling at her beauty, and suspicious of something that was in her face. He went back to the beach. There he caught himself short, astonishment bringing a sharp exclamation from his lips.

His canoe and outfit were gone!

Out of the star-gloom behind him floated a soft ripple of laughter as Yellow Bird ran to her tepee.

And from the mist of water—far out—came a voice, the voice of Jolly Roger McKay.

"Good by, Cassidy!"

With it mingled the defiant bark of a dog.

In her tepee, a moment later, Yellow Bird drew Sun Cloud's glossy head close against her warm breast, and turned her radiant face up thankfully to the smoke hole in the tepee top, through



"No—you better not go far, and you better wait," said the girl to Roger McKay, and there was an unspoken

which the spirits had whispered their warning to her. Indistinctly, and still farther away, her straining ears heard again the cry:

"Good by, Cassidy!"

In Cassidy's canoe, driving himself with steady strokes deeper into the mystery of the starlit waters of Wollaston, Jolly Roger felt the night suddenly filled with an exhilarating tonic. Its deadness was gone. Its weight had lifted. A ripple broke the star gleams where an increasing breeze touched the surface of the lake. And the thrill of adventure stirred in his blood. He laughed as he put his skill and strength in the sweep of his paddle, and for a time the thought that he was an outlaw, and in losing Nada had lost everything in life worth fighting for, was not so oppressive. It was the old, joyous laugh, stirred by his sense

72

of humor, and the trick he had played on Cassidy. He could imagine Cassidy back on the shore, his temper redder than his hair as he cursed and tore up the sand in his search for another canoe.

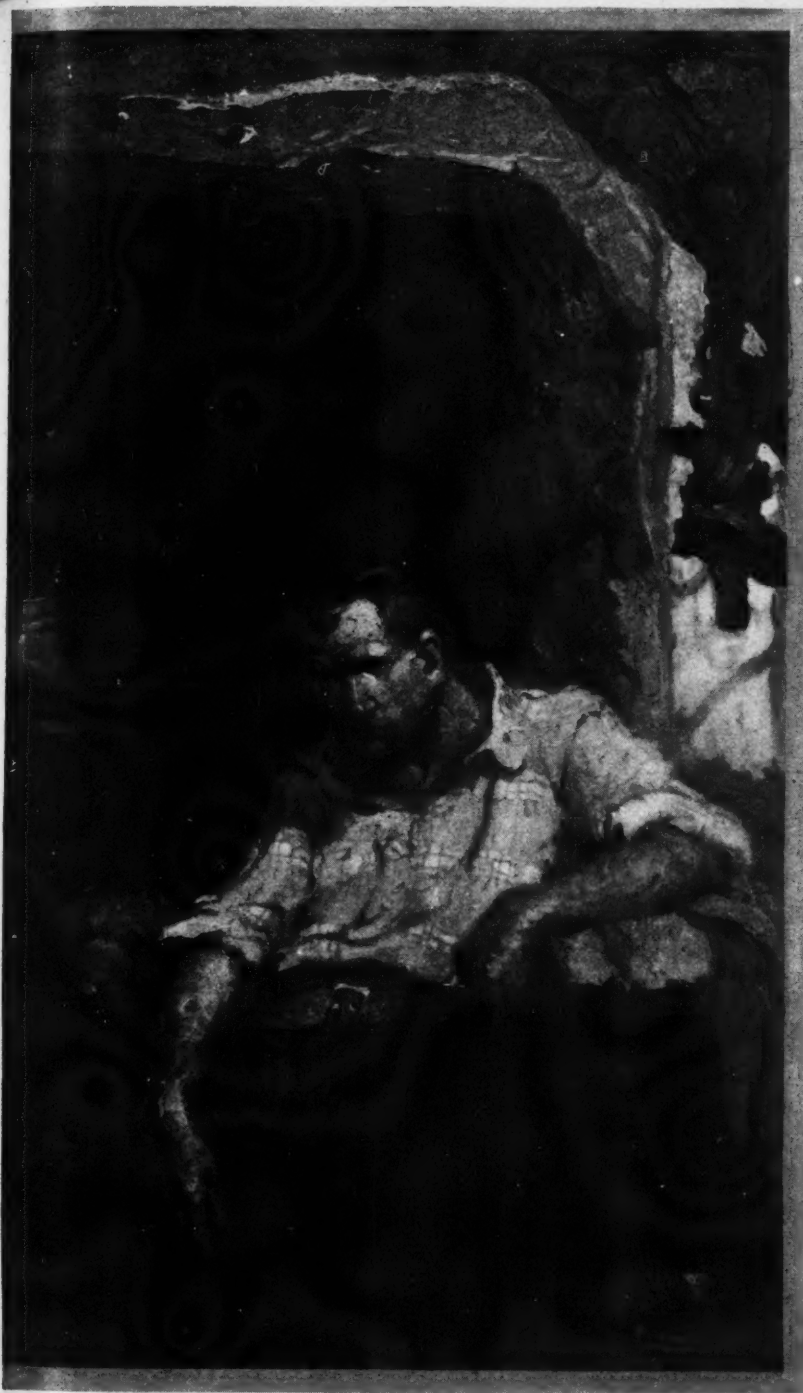
For three years Corporal Terence Cassidy, the Irish bloodhound of "M" Division, had meant more in Jolly Roger's life than all the other armed forces of the King of England.

"We're inseparable," Jolly Roger had explained to Peter. "Wherever I go, Cassidy is sure to follow. You see, it's this way. A long time ago some one gave Cassidy what they call an assignment, and in that assignment it says 'go get Jolly Roger McKay, dead or alive'—or something to that effect. And Cassidy has been on the job ever since. But he can't quite catch up with me. Pied-Bot. I'm always a little ahead."

And yet, even as he laughed, there was in Jolly Roger's heart

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thing in the dark glow of her eyes that made him pause.

a yearning to which he had never given voice. Half a dozen times he might have killed Cassidy, and an equal number of times Cassidy might have killed him. But neither had taken advantage of the opportunity to destroy. They had played the long and thrilling game like men, and because of the fairness and sportsmanship of the man who hunted him Jolly Roger thought of Cassidy as he might have thought of a brother, and more than once he yearned to go to him, and hold out his hand in friendship. Yet he knew Corporal Cassidy was the deadliest menace the earth held for him, a menace that had followed him like a shadow through months and years—across the Barren Lands, along the rim of the Arctic, down the Mackenzie, and back again—a menace that never tired, and was never far behind in that ten thousand miles of wilderness they had covered. Together in the blood-stirring game of One against One they had

faced the deadliest perils of the Northland. They had gone hungry and cold, and more than once a thousand miles of nothingness lay behind them, and death seemed preferable to anything that might lie ahead. Yet in that aloneness, when companionship was more precious than anything else on earth, neither had cried quits. The game had gone on, Cassidy after his man—and Jolly Roger McKay fighting for his freedom.

As he headed his canoe north and east, Jolly Roger thought again of the wager made weeks ago down at Cragg's Ridge, when he had turned the tables on Cassidy and when Cassidy had made a solemn oath to resign from the service if he failed to get his man in their next encounter. He knew Cassidy would keep his word, and something told him that tonight the last act in this tragedy of two had begun. He chuckled again as he pictured the probable course of events on shore. Cassidy, backed by the law, was demanding another canoe and a necessary outfit of Slim Buck. Slim Buck, falling back on his tribal dignity, was killing all possible time in making the preparations. When pursuit was resumed Jolly Roger would have at least a mile the start of the red-headed nemesis who hung to his trail. And Wollaston Lake, sixty miles from end to end, and half as wide, offered plenty of room in which to find safety.

The rising of the wind, which came from the south and west, was pleasing to Jolly Roger, and he put less caution and more force into the sweep of his paddle. For two hours he kept steadily eastward, and then swung a little north, guiding himself by the stars. With the breaking of dawn he made out the thickly wooded shore on the opposite side of the lake from Slim Buck's camp, and before the sun was half an hour high he had drawn up his canoe at the tip of a headland which gave him a splendid view of the lake in all directions.

From this point, comfortably encamped in the cool shadows of a thick clump of spruce, Jolly Roger and Peter watched all that day for a sign of their enemy. As far as the eye could reach no movement of human life appeared on the quiet surface of Wollaston. Not until that hazy hour between sunset and dusk did he build a fire and cook a meal from the supplies in Cassidy's pack, for he knew smoke could be discerned much farther than a canoe. Yet even as he observed this caution he was confident there was no longer

any danger in returning to Yellow Bird and her people.

"You see, Pied-Bot," he said, discussing the matter with Peter, while he smoked a pipeful of tobacco in the early evening, "Cassidy thinks we're on our way north, as fast as we can go. He'll hit for the upper end of the Lake and the Black River waterway, and keep right on into the Porcupine country. It's a big country up there, and we've always taken plenty of space for our travels. Shall we go back to Yellow Bird, Peter? And Sun Cloud?"

Peter tried to answer, and thumped his tail, but even as he asked the questions there was a doubt growing in Jolly Roger's mind. He wanted to go back, and as darkness gathered about him he was urged by a great loneliness. Only Yellow Bird grieved with him in his loss of Nada, and understood how empty life had become for him. She had, in a (Continued on page 105)



"But that charge is ridiculous, insane," said Grant into the 'phone. "So is murder," replied Cavanan.

Who actually killed Blanding? Why was the murder committed? Was Folly Dare cleared? And by what means? All these questions are answered in this last—and most thrilling—instalment of—

The FIRST NIGHT

by Arthur Somers Roche

Illustrations by Grant T. Reynard

OUTSIDE was a fire escape that ran to a courtyard below. Through the window Cavanan craned his head. That courtyard had as egress an alleyway. He withdrew his head to turn his attention to the body of the man upon the bed.

Callous he seemed. But he was fighting for Ffolliott Dare. For her reputation, her career, for all that made life attractive to a charming girl who was also a genius. A dozen Telchers, done brutally to death, would have aroused no sympathy in the heart of Cavanan just now. For he knew that he must send immediately for the police, that they would interfere with any investigation that he chose to make; his only chance was now.

Looking down upon the murdered man—there was no sign

of a weapon in the room; the theory of suicide could not be seriously considered—he was apparently studying the features of the man, his position in the bed. But he was doing none of these things. Telcher's position did not matter. It was too obvious that he had been shot through the window. So, his mind noted parenthetically, had been Stewart Blanding. The murderer affected that sort of position from which to fire his weapon.

The murderer! He put the word in its singular, not its plural number. For he knew, just as inevitably now as later on, that the man who had killed Stewart Blanding had also killed Telcher. Of course, there was always coincidence, and he would consider it now as he had considered it a little while ago.

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But there, on the dingy chest of drawers, just where Telcher had undoubtedly tossed them, was a heap of crumpled bills. Cavan could visualize the scene that had preceded the murder. The drunken man, elated with the success of his blackmail, staggering into the shabby room, fingering that money which remained to him after satisfying his thirst.

He walked closer to the chest of drawers, staring at the money. Folly Dare had told Cavan that she had given the man all the money that she had in her apartment. She had not mentioned the amount, but certainly she had not possessed, in cash, anything like two thousand dollars! Such a sum was incredible. And yet, upon that dresser lay nearly that amount! Cavan, without touching it, could count it.

Where had this man Telcher procured such a sum? Behind the spectacles his eyes gleamed again with the lust of the man hunt. He did not know now, but he *would* know. This he swore to himself as he turned away, toward the door, in the frame of which still stood the frightened woman who had admitted him to the apartment.

He had seen all that he wished to see. He knew how the murderer had gained the position from which Telcher had been shot. All that he needed was five or ten minutes more before the police should be summoned.

"I'll go for the police," he told the woman curtly. "You stay in the front of your apartment and wait for them. Understand?"

She led the way to the front door and when Cavan glanced over his shoulder at her she was sitting in one of the rickety chairs. He only needed, he hoped, five or ten minutes. She would remain where he had ordered her to stay for at least half an hour before growing restive, before screaming from her front window for the police.

On the landing below he paused and knocked upon a door. A child, of perhaps ten, answered his rap. Yes, her mother was in; she'd fetch her. Of the woman who returned with the little girl, Cavan asked tersely:

"Anyone been on the fire escape today?"

The woman, patterned after the woman upstairs in apparel and in miserable expression, nodded and replied as briefly:

"Yeh. Fire inspector."

Cavan's eyes gleamed. "Uniformed?" he demanded.

The woman shook her head. "Nope, just overalls, Mister."

"Thanks," said Cavan. "I've been looking for him."

The woman's apathetic eyes brightened a trifle. "Phony, Mister?"

"Oh, no!" said Cavan lightly.

"A-course not," said the woman. "What would a crook be doin' around this dump? There ain't nothin' to steal," she finished grimly.

"Much obliged," said Cavan. "Oh!" and he paused a yard away from the door, "what sort of a looking man was he?"

"Kinda stout chap, gray-headed—"

"Thank you," he said, and clattered down the stairs as the door closed.

For the moment he forgot the double murder, in contemplation of what man considers the lesser tragedies, but which are really, because they last interminably, perhaps the greater ones. The hopelessness of this woman, of Telcher's landlady; the un-

remitting battle against poverty; the terror that little by little creeps into the eyes of the poor until at last it seems permanently lodged there, seems to *belong* there.

But he could give to these thoughts only a passing attention now. He saw so much of poverty in his reportorial life. And he had learned from this woman that corroboration of his own theory which was all that was needed to make him certain of the correctness of the theory.

Telcher had been slain by some one who aimed his revolver from the fire escape outside the window of the room in which the man had fallen on his bed in drunken slumber. The man knew where Telcher lived, knew how to gain a station near Telcher without arousing suspicion.

A fire inspector! How simple a lie, and how quickly believed. Therefore he had managed to deflect all undue interest, until he crouched outside Telcher's window. A silencer on his revolver, exactly as last night, when he had fired at Stewart Blanding. The shot, the leisurely descent to the courtyard, egress by the alley to the street . . .

Why? The answer was obvious. Because Telcher possessed information that threatened the murderer's safety. But Telcher had told Folly Dare that he possessed information that threatened the safety of Allan Grant. Could Grant then, after all, be the murderer?

Cavan shook his head. According to the woman of the apartment below where Telcher lodged, the alleged fire inspector had been a stout, gray-haired man. Not Grant! Of course, disguise was possible, but Cavan took little stock in disguises, beyond those changes which a man or a woman may effect by donning apparel different from the kind that ordinarily they wear.

Gray hair and stout! Bolster, the man who had rented the office in the building next to the Regent Theater, had been gray-haired and stout.

And Telcher had had almost two thousand dollars, a great deal more than Folly Dare could have given him. From whom had he procured this sum, this amazing sum to be found in the possession of a drunken night watchman? From the gray-haired man, then.

But why had Telcher told Folly Dare that he had seen, purchasing a revolver in an Eighth Avenue pawnshop, Allan Grant?

Well, he could determine the answer to that question when he found out who the gray-haired man was. Sufficient, just now, to know that Telcher had blackmailed two people, Ffolliott Dare and the gray-haired man, and that the latter had coldly done the man to death. Cavan, again visualizing that latest murder, found little sympathy in his heart for

Telcher. The wages of sin are not always paid, but in this case they had been. Blackmail is the lowest form of evil; Telcher had got no more than he deserved. Nevertheless, the gray-haired man had committed another murder; for this he should pay a penalty. Further, Folly Dare was threatened.

He entered a drug store and from the telephone booth called up Police Headquarters. His name was enough to get him an immediate connection with the Inspector commanding the homicide bureau.

"Man murdered—night watchman of the Regent Theater," said Cavan. He gave the address.

"How did you tumble on it?" demanded the inspector. His voice was eager. "Cavvie, you still working on the Blanding thing?"

"Ask me no questions, Inspector, and I'll tell you no lies, old thing," laughed Cavan. "I've given you information, as any right-minded, law-abiding citizen should do. Beyond that, Inspector, you know what Cavan will give you."

"But listen," said the inspector. "I'm liable to issue an



Her voice came to him: "Allan says he was never in any pawnshop."

The First Night

order, you know, get a judge to write your name on a nice little piece of paper. Nice pretty handwriting. It'll say Stevie Cavan, and it'll mean that Stevie will be warming a cold bench in a colder cell if he isn't a good boy. Accessory after the fact, you know. Withholding information—"

"And Stevie will be very grateful for the Inspector's kindly thought," chuckled Cavan. "His loving friends remember him, eh? Why, you great big lunkhead, how do you get that way? Don't you suppose I know a busted flush when I see it? Why, doggone it, Inspector, for two cents I'd come downtown and—"

"Oh, well, if you feel that way about it, Stevie," said the Inspector, "I'll take it all back."

"You better had," grumbled Cavan. "Trying to scare me as though I were a nineteen year old cub."

"Well, you can't send a guy to the chair for trying," whined the Inspector. "Listen here, Steve. Have you got anything? Is there any connection between this killing and last night's?"

"You soak the cloth in vinegar," said Cavan, "and apply it at frequent intervals to the fevered temples. If a cure is not effected within eight years you blow your stupid brains out. Good by."

He hung up cheerfully. The Inspector—his name was Burke—was an old friend. Such little amenities as had just passed between them were commonplaces. Always Burke threatened Cavan's arrest, and always Cavan professed great indignation. Neither of them, behind the byplay, ever forgot for a moment that they were rivals, but generous ones. Burke might not have been Inspector but for information that Cavan had pushed his way, preferring to see a friend make a profit than to achieve all glory for himself.

Within five minutes the police would be ransacking Telcher's apartment. Within half an hour they would know all that was to be known there, including the visit of the pseudo fire inspector. But Cavan would have half an hour's start. And in that half an hour's start he could do much, he hoped.

He wished that he had dared examine Telcher's effects. But the landlady's suspicions would have been aroused; she would have thought him a thief, might have screamed for help. It would have simplified matters had he been able to find a pawn ticket, dated yesterday. But Eighth Avenue, while a long street, had only so many pawnshops on it. And it was quite probable that Telcher patronized one within reasonable proximity to the Regent Theater. On such an assumption Cavan would begin to act.

He found a taxi at Columbus Circle and rode a half-dozen blocks down Eighth Avenue. There he alighted and entered a pawnshop. He wished that he had procured from Fogarty one of those police handbills which had borne Telcher's picture, but he had expected to talk to a live Telcher, not to find another murder. And it would take so much time to go back to the theater, accompany Fogarty to his home. It was getting on toward evening. If Folly Dare was to play tonight, she must play with the shadow of scandal lifted from her. Cavan was going to find out, today, before dark, who was the murderer of Stewart Blanding.

Somehow he knew that he could—and would. Because of this he wished to waste no time in talk with the police, wished to answer none of their minute-devouring questions. They would hunt him up, despite the friendliness of Inspector Burke, as soon as possible, to get from him, an eyewitness of the scene of the murder though not of the deed, all possible clues. They would be particularly interested in knowing why he had paid a visit to the home of the Regent Theater's night watchman. He'd be compelled to tell them, of course, but—they'd have to find him first. And while they casually searched for him—there'd be no question of warrants—he'd be searching for the man who had killed Folly Dare's leading man.

It is hard to loosen the tongues of pawnbrokers. They are, by nature of their business, suspicious. Suspicious people are often taciturn. Reporters are not too welcome within the precincts of a pawnshop, unless, of course, they come as clients.

Cavan was no client. But, on the right kind of a story, he was always willing to spend the Moon's money, and the Moon never accused him of being reckless or extravagant. This was not, primarily, the Moon's business upon which he was engaged. He was serving Ffolliott Dare, and was prepared to spend his own scant savings in her behalf. And so, in each of the shops that he entered, he made display of his not too great store of banknotes.

He preceded each interview with a ten dollar bill pressed in the palm of the man behind the counter. "There's ninety more if you can give me the answers I want," he said.

Then he would give Telcher's name, and describe the late night watchman of the Regent with a photographic accuracy. Four times he got nothing in return for his ten dollar bill. No one giving the name of Telcher, or corresponding to his description, had been in these shops yesterday.

But in the fifth shop perseverance won. The pimply clerk, apparently the son of the grossly overfed woman who hovered in the rear of the shop, glanced at his employer.

"Sure, Abe," she said. "Why not? For a hundred dollars we should keep secrets, not?"

The pimply youth grinned. "But he didn't give his name as Telcher," he said. "Jones, he gave his name as. He pledged—wait till I take a look."

He reached beneath the counter and brought forth a huge ledger. As he opened it he spoke, loquacity granted him by the ten dollars paid on account and the further promise of ninety more.

"I'd remember him in a million, because he certainly was drunk," he said, "and hootch ain't so plentiful nowadays."

He flipped the pages of the ledger with a practiced thumb.

"There it is, Samuel Jones, of 9075 Ninth Avenue. A-course, he don't live there, but we can't help that. He pledged a stick-pin. We let him have three and a half on it. Gimme the ninety."

"One minute," said Cavan: "While he was in here a man bought a revolver."

"Abe," said the woman warningly, "you don't got to gab all day, you know."

The pimply youth's smile faded. His thick lips took on a hard expression.

"How do you get that way?" he demanded. "Don't you suppose we got respect for the law? We don't sell revolvers."

"Not as a general rule," said Cavan, "but this time—eh? Listen. This is a murder case. If you don't tell me you'll be telling the police tonight. If you *do* tell me I'll keep it away from the police. No reason for them to know about it all. Ninety dollars—"

"I sold a man a clock," said the clerk.

"That's how you put it on your books, but it was a revolver," said Cavan. "Why, I'll have this man Telcher—or Jones—down here in ten minutes—come through!"

"You're a private detective?" asked the woman.

"Never mind what I am. Who bought the revolver?" demanded Cavan. His voice was harsh, menacing. It was against the law to sell revolvers, and the penalty was severe. But he seemed to know whereof he spoke, and the pimply youth had been careless yesterday. He had sold a weapon while this Telcher-Jones man was in the shop.

"If it's a moider case how can you keep it from the police?" asked the clerk.

"I can. I promise you that I can," said Cavan.

Pawnbrokers trust no one. But Cavan had a way of inspiring confidence.

"How do I know his name?" demanded the clerk.

"What did he look like?" asked Cavan.

"Well, he was fat and gray-haired," said the clerk. "But don't you think I'll admit anything like that again. Why," he exclaimed, "how can you prove I sold a gun? This guy Jones-Telcher—"

"I can't prove it," laughed Cavan. "I don't need to prove it. I simply want to know it. Here's your money."

He walked smilingly out, while the clerk and his mother exchanged glances. They didn't quite understand why they had given information, believing that they were compelled to, when it was quite obvious that all they had had to do was deny having made such a sale. Cavan was quite remarkable in his ability to extract information. But a moment's reflection cheered them up. They could deny having made the admission, and—they had one hundred unexpected dollars. It's an ill wind, even that blowing across the victim of a murder, that blows nobody good.

XIV

A FAT, gray-haired man, calling himself Samuel Bolster, had rented an office in the building next the Regent Theater, which gave him sufficient excuse to be in that building after dark. From the floor on which Bolster's office was situated Stewart Blanding had been killed. Cavan could not prove that yet, but he knew it.

A fat, gray-haired man, attired in a suit of overalls, and posing as a fire inspector, had climbed the fire escape of the building

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"Why," demanded Cavanan, "why did you do it?" Garrison sat quiet for a moment, cool and saturnine.

where Telcher lived, and Telcher had been murdered. There would be little necessity for advancing proof that the gray-haired man had killed the night watchman; it would be the province of the pseudo fire inspector to prove that he had not done so.

A fat, gray-haired man had purchased a revolver in a pawnshop at the moment when Telcher was doing business in the same shop.

Here were three circumstances that might be explained away by coincidence. But Cavanan, still willing to concede that coincidence has its existence, was not paying much attention to that theory today. It was too much to ask of anyone.

The fat, gray-haired man who had figured in these three situations was one and the same person. He was the murderer! And, feeling certain that he had arrived at the truth there, Cavanan asked himself further questions.

Why had the man killed Blanding? This was unanswerable. Until the name and circumstances of the murderer were known—Cavanan was not simple enough to believe that Bolster was the murderer's real name—the cause of the murder would be, he felt, undiscoverable save through sheerest accident.

But the further question, why had the gray-haired man killed

Telcher?—that was easily answered. Telcher had blackmailed the man. Strolling slowly down Eighth Avenue, Cavanan sought, in the recesses of his mind, for argument to prove this answer. Such argument was easily found.

Telcher had seen the man purchase the revolver. Today, following last night's murder, Telcher had called on Folly and blackmailed her. He had told her that he had seen Grant under the eye of suspicion today, yesterday purchasing a deadly weapon.

Grant! Allan Grant! That was the name that he had given to Ffolliott Dare. But why? He said that he knew Grant; that he'd seen him around the theater during rehearsal.

But, unless the clerk in the pawnshop deliberately lied, it was not Grant whom Telcher had seen bargaining for the revolver. It had been some one else. And the clerk had not lied in his description of the man. If the clerk had lied, then it would have been a remarkable coincidence that, in the support of his falsehood, he should have given a description of the revolver buyer that so strangely resembled the description of the alleged fire inspector and the lessor of the office next door to the Regent Theater.

But Telcher had not told the truth when he blackmailed Folly Dare. Why had the man lied? Could it be possible that Telcher had made a mistake, that he had thought the buyer of the revolver was named Grant? It would have been a not impossible mistake. He might have heard the name Grant; might have assumed that it belonged to another than its rightful possessor.

Telcher, so he had told Folly, had seen the man whom he believed to be Grant, around the theater during rehearsals. And already Cavanan had told himself that the murderer was a man who was conversant with the action of the play "Folly."

What stout and gray-haired man had to do with the play? Cavanan could not answer. He knew Mannheim's staff pretty well, though casually. There was no one in Mannheim's employ who answered that description. Nor did any of the employees of the theater, so far as he knew, answer to it. Of course, one of the many stage hands. But they could be eliminated. Telcher would not have mistaken a stage hand for the man who paid his court to Folly Dare. It was some one who had that air of prosperity, of breeding, that would have satisfied Telcher that he *could* have been Allan Grant.

And Cavanan had seen approximately two thousand dollars on Telcher's shabby dresser. Proof conclusive that Telcher, after leaving Folly Dare, and wringing from her tribute in response to his threats, had gone to some one else and levied blackmail upon that some one else.

To whom, then, must he have gone? Obviously to Allan Grant. But Grant would not have paid him money. Grant had not been in the pawnshop yesterday; Telcher had no information the disclosure of which would have been fatal to Grant.

But from Grant, Telcher must have learned the real name of the man whom he had assumed, through some curious mistake, to be Grant. From that man Telcher had obtained money. And he, who had submitted to blackmail, had not undertaken to entrust his life to the discretion of a common drunkard. He had followed Telcher, learned where he lived—and killed him.

Dressed in a suit of common overalls, he had climbed the fire escape . . . But there was no sense in wasting good mental tissue in reconstruction of the obvious. Cavanan knew that. He must not exhaust his mentality in pondering admitted facts. It was the conclusions to which facts might lead him, or the ferreting out of other facts, to which he must bend his mental forces.

Arrived at this mental way station, he stopped and looked about him. Across the street was a drug store and it bore among its other signs and notifications to the passing public, the blue sign telling that within was a telephone booth. Cavanan hurriedly crossed the street, bringing to that perilous adventure a recklessness that earned him curses from the appalled chauffeurs who made the passage hint of fatality.

From the booth inside he called up his own apartment. Suddenly he remembered what, in the press of the hunt; he had forgotten—that Folly Dare was in his apartment, waiting word from him, and that he loved her. For, although Cavanan would be a tender lover, whose heart was always true, his mind would sometimes be master of his heart, as it must be with all artists.



"Sure," said the woman. "For a hundred dollars we keep

He could forget joy or sorrow with equal facility when work pressed. Perhaps that is why real artists are the most satisfactory of all lovers; their minds burned blank by their work, they bring a childlike mentality and full hearts to their adored ones.

Folly answered. Her voice was tremulous, weary.

"This is Stephen Cavanan," he told her.

Into her voice, that had been languidly apprehensive, came eagerness.

"Oh!" That was all she said, but it was enough for Cavanan. For that monosyllable seemed to express a confidence, a trust, a faith, that was more impressive than many sentences would have been.

"Thought I'd forgotten you?" he asked.

"I knew better than that," she told him.

He seemed visibly to grow. "Thank you," he said. His voice shook with embarrassment.

"What have you done?" she asked.

"Lots," he replied. "I've looked up the man Telcher—how much money did you give him?"

"I don't know—exactly. All that I had in the apartment. Not more than a couple of hundred dollars," she replied.

He nodded self-approvingly. He'd been correct in one deduction then. And if correct in one, why not correct in all? Thus, exultantly, he questioned himself, to receive assuring response from his own mind.

"I thought so," he told her.

"What did he say?" she demanded. "Allan says that he was never in any pawnshop, never bought any revolver—"

"Have you talked with him?" he demanded.

"He's here now," she replied.

"Oh!" he said. His ejaculation of the monosyllable brought, though he was not aware of it, as great a measure of delight to her as her own ejaculation had brought to him. She was a flirt was Ffolliott Dare, though no more of one than a pretty girl should be. And the discovery that Cavanan was the unwillingly kissed youth of so many years ago had awakened pleasurable

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secrets—not!" The pimply youth grinned. "He was fat and gray-haired," he confessed, "but how can you prove I sold him a gun?"

thoughts in the mind of the young actress. To learn, so swiftly, that Cavanan had succumbed to her charms! The mightiest hunter does not disdain another proof of his skill.

"Yes; just after you left I managed to locate him. He came over at once," said Folly.

Her voice was too bland. But Cavanan could not know that. He writhed as he listened. So, while he'd been running his legs off, thinking his head off, to save Folly Dare from the withering blight of scandal, her lover had been with her, perhaps offering with lips and arms those comforts—but this was unworthy of him. Not so unworthy, perhaps, as he thought. For Folly Dare read vital speech into his silence. She knew exactly how he felt, and rejoiced thereat.

But he felt it unworthy, and so he fought such thoughts away from him. How absurd for him to entertain them for a moment. Allan Grant was a distinguished young architect; socially and financially he had things to offer Ffolliott Dare that Cavanan had not. Stephen Cavanan had a career ahead of him; he knew that as absolutely as every artist must know it. For what is conceit to the business man is merely the proper amount of egotism to the artist. And though, at the moment, he did detective work, Cavanan did it for a girl. Art lay before him.

"Allan saw Telcher; the man came to see him, and——"
"He did?" Cavanan cried the question. "Let me speak to Grant, please."

"Certainly," she said. To his amazement he read something that might be pique in her voice. His heart throbbed. Of course he was insane, deluded, but—it sounded as though she wanted to continue talking to him. But then, why be an ass? Of course she did. He hadn't told her anything of what he was doing in her behalf. Since when had he become a sentimental jackass who read romance in words that spelled practicality? Of course she wanted to hear from him what success he had achieved.

"Hello, Mr. Cavanan," said Grant. His voice annoyed Cavanan. Even now, when he must be under strain, his tones held that cool aloofness which is the prerogative of success.

And how successful this youth was. He had money, position, a career and—Ffolliott Dare. And the last of these possessions should well enrich the poorest man on earth!

"Hello," said Cavanan shortly.

"Any luck?" asked Grant.

The phrase irritated Cavanan. He was in a mood when he could not deal in justice.

"Luck? It won't be luck if I win out on this matter," he retorted. "It'll be the hardest kind of concentrated hard work."

He regretted his surliness, his childish conceit, immediately, for Grant's voice was at once apologetic.

"Of course not. I didn't mean the word. Beg pardon. I——"

"Not at all," said Cavanan. "I—I'm—harassed, you know—ill-tempered——"

There! He'd had to apologize to Folly's fiancé. How like an ill-bred child he was acting!

"You certainly must be worn out," said Grant. "What news?"

"I want yours first," said Cavanan. "Miss Dare tells me that you saw Telcher today."

"Yes."

"Where? When?" asked Cavanan.

"At my apartment," was the reply. "After I left you—Mr. Perry and I went off together, you remember—I kept out of the way of reporters. But I went to my rooms later on, and found this man waiting for me. The reporters had given me up. My man had convinced them that I'd really gone out of town. But this Telcher person wouldn't believe my valet's statement. He said that he had a message from Miss Dare. And so my man, deciding that the man was neither a reporter nor a detective, decided to let him in. A message from Miss Dare would be important. He realized that."

"Of course," said Cavanan. He tried to keep irritation from his voice. What sort of a man was this Grant? Didn't he understand that people had feelings? Why rub it in that he was Miss

The First Night

Dare's fiancé? Then he grinned at himself. Grant could not be expected to know that Cavasan had emulated the rest of Folly's acquaintances, and fallen in love with her. Cavasan must be fair.

"Of course," echoed Grant. He had a somewhat English way of clipping his syllables. It did nothing to endear him to Cavasan.

"Well, you saw Telcher. What did he want?" asked Cavasan.

"That's the amazing part of it," said Grant. "In view of what Miss Dare has since told me, that he blackmailed her—but you know that."

"Yes," said Cavasan. He'd be fair, but after all, what a long-winded, garrulous person this Grant was. Cavasan wondered that Miss Dare didn't see that, wasn't annoyed by it.

"Well, when I slipped into my rooms, Bennett, my valet, told of the waiting man, who'd said his name was Telcher. I went into the library, where he was waiting, and asked him for his message. He said that he'd give it to Mr. Grant—to no one else. It took some time to convince him that I was Grant. Indeed, Bennett had to assure him.

"Then he wanted to know if I was the Allan Grant that was engaged to Miss Dare. Oh, I give you my word, I had to give proofs to the fellow! But finally he was satisfied. Rather, I'd say dissatisfied. For he was the most downcast chap I ever saw.

"I asked him again for his message. And he had the impertinence to tell me that he'd forgotten it. I'd have knocked it out of him, but that he was so drunk I finally decided that liquor alone had brought him to me. For he'd let drop that he was the night watchman of the Regent Theater, and I supposed that he'd been brooding about the murder until that and liquor had upset him."

"He asked no further questions?" inquired Cavasan.

"Oh, but he did! Indeed he did," said Grant. "He wanted to know—got quite argumentative about it—how he'd happened to make such a mistake as thinking some one else was Allan Grant. I assured him that I'd no idea how. Said that some one else had been pointed out to him in the theater as Allan Grant. Finally said that the other person hadn't been pointed out, but that he'd heard my name and sort of fastened it on this man."

"Did he describe the other man?" asked Cavasan.

"No," was the reply. "What do you make of him? You've talked with him, haven't you?"

"No," said Cavasan.

Grant was surprised. "I gathered, from listening to Miss Dare talk to you just now, that you had."

"He's dead," said Grant.

"Dead?"

"Murdered," said Cavasan.

Grant's answer was a long whistle of amazement.

"I think," said Cavasan, "that he was killed by the same man that killed Blanding."

"And you know that man?" demanded Grant.

"No," said Cavasan. "I thought that you might."

"I?" Grant's voice held amazement.

"Have you, in your acquaintance, a gray-haired, stout man?" demanded Cavasan. "And did such a person ever visit the theater, during rehearsal, with you? Or was he there while you were there, so that Telcher might, hearing your name, have thought this man owned it?"

"Why, yes," said Grant. "Mr. Garrison. Henry Garrison. An old friend of my father's, and a good friend of mine. Eminent architect. Doesn't practice the profession any longer, but—why do you ask?"

"I wanted to know," said Cavasan. "Where does he live?"

"Carthew Chambers—Gramercy Park. Why?" again demanded the young architect.

"Oh, I want to ask him a few questions!" said Cavasan.

"But you don't think—why, if Telcher told Folly that he saw me buying a revolver—and thought that Mr. Garrison was I—why, then—just exactly what are you driving at, Mr. Cavasan?"

"At exactly what you think I'm driving at," said the reporter.

"But—but that's absurd, ridiculous, insane," cried Grant.

"So's murder," said Cavasan, hanging up the receiver.

The Carthew Chambers, on Gramercy Park, were exactly the sort of apartments that one might expect to house a retired professional man of means. Eminently respectable, old-fashioned enough to be a silent protest against new times, new people and new ideas, the building would necessarily appeal to such a man as Garrison, thought Cavasan as he surveyed it from across the street.

Still, and Cavasan's lips curled grimly, Garrison couldn't be so extremely old-fashioned, if he was the man whom the reporter sought. Silencers on revolvers are not old-fashioned!

Cavasan crossed the street and of the telephone operator within the lobby of the Carthew Chambers made the request that he be announced to Mr. Henry Garrison. He gave his own name and occupation. Why not? Under an alias he might have difficulty in obtaining admission to Garrison's presence. Under his own name, if he met with difficulty, his suspicions would receive a certain verification.

But Mr. Garrison was not at home. He had gone out a little while ago, and the time of his return was indefinite. Cavasan left the building and hesitated a moment outside, undecided as to his next step.

He remembered now the man whom he had seen with the youth who later became identified as Allan Grant, when he was dining last evening at the "Trois Hommes". Of course, that companion of Grant was not gray-haired. But people often confuse white and gray. Nor would Cavasan, at the time, have termed him fat. But he was certainly, despite his well preserved figure, not slender. Cavasan wondered.

A slap on the back knocked wonderment and all other thought or emotion, save indignation, from him.

He wheeled, to meet the grinning face of his friendly rival, Inspector Burke.

"Well, well, well!" guffawed the Inspector. "Little Stevie Cavasan thought he could give his good friends the slip, eh? How about a nice little ride down to Headquarters, and a nice comfortable little cell where you can think how foolish it is to withhold information from the police?"

Cavasan's indignation faded from his countenance; in its place appeared a weary boredom. "Quit your nonsense, Burke," he said. "What are you doing down here?"

"All roads lead to Rome," quoted Burke, sententiously. "It don't matter much which one you take. I took the good old fast road; you took the road of theory, eh?"

Cavasan paid no attention to the question. "Where have your facts led you?" he demanded.

Burke grinned. "A little jealous, eh, Cavvie, old boy? Lead me? Well, in about a minute they're going to take me into that building opposite." And he pointed to the Carthew Chambers.

"He isn't in," said Cavasan.

Burke stared at him. "Who isn't in?" he demanded. He placed his heavy hand on the reporter's shoulder. "Listen, Stevie. It's all O. K. for you to try and get a good story for the *Moon*, but you mustn't go nutty while you're getting it."

"Don't talk nonsense," retorted Cavasan curtly. "You're down here to see the same man I'm after, aren't you?"

"I'm down here to take a look at his rooms," replied the Inspector, "but I ain't much of a believer in ghosts, Stevie. I hardly expect to find Blanding there."

"Blanding?" ejaculated Cavasan.

"Who else?" asked Burke. "Ain't that what you're here for? I figured you'd just about decided that while a guy can travel quite a way on theory, before he finishes he has to play with a few facts."

"Does—did Blanding live in the Carthew Chambers?" demanded Cavasan.

"Any reason why he shouldn't?" asked Burke.

"None at all!" cried Cavasan. Behind his glasses his eyes suddenly gleamed. "Wait here a minute, Inspector," he cried, "until I—"

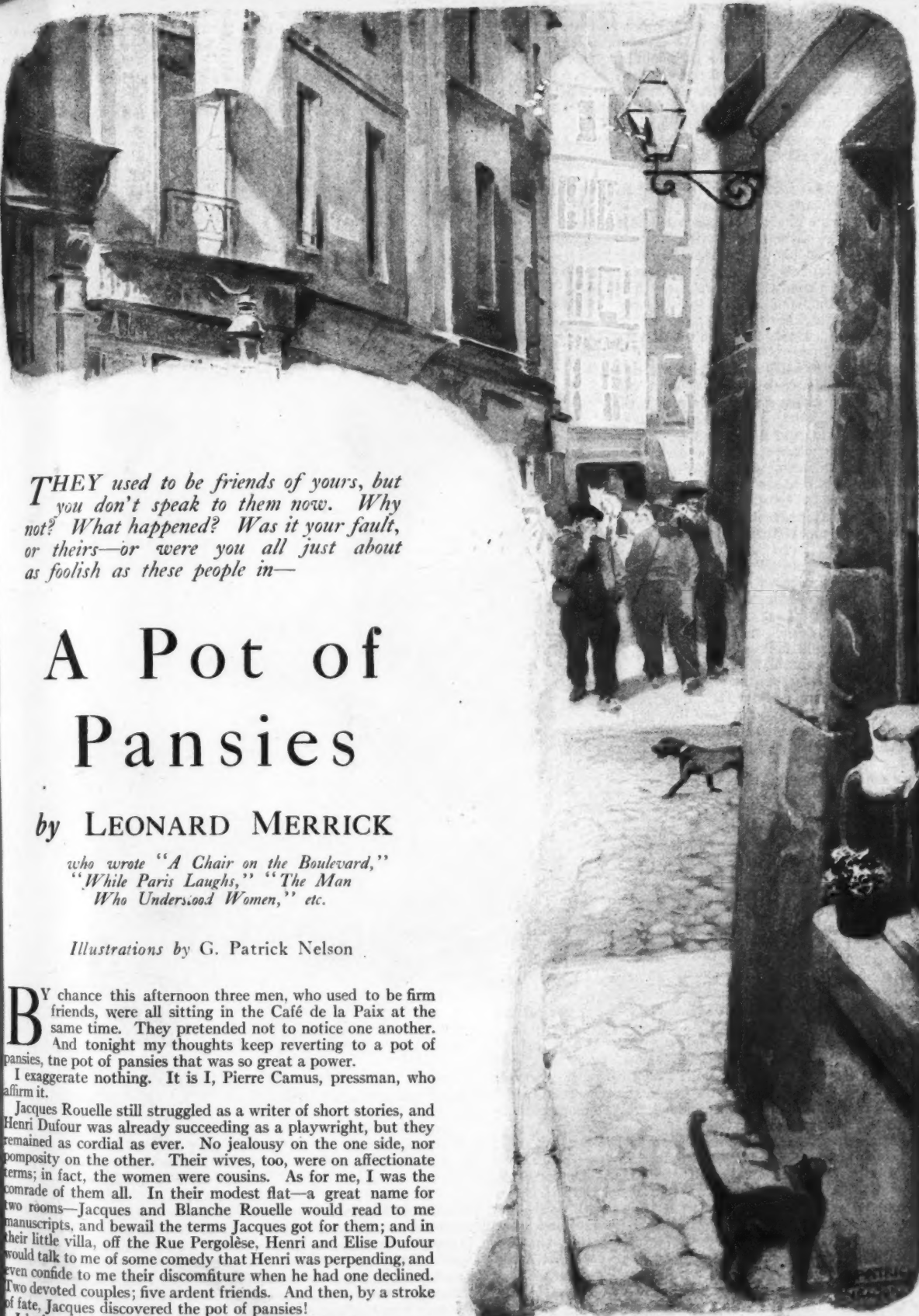
Burke's thick fingers tightened on the reporter's shoulders. "Not on your life, Stevie," he said. "You know too darned much. You tip us to a murder—a murder that's mixed up with last night's affair—"

"How do you know?" interjected Cavasan.

"We ain't exactly boobs downtown," retorted Burke. "Telcher was night watchman at the Regent, wasn't he? And he had a flock of dough in his room that no night watchman ever saved, didn't he? And the guy that bumped him off didn't do it for the coin, did he? Else why would he leave it when he couldn't grab it easy as not. It don't take a Sherlock Holmes to figure that Telcher got the kale for keeping his mouth shut and that the guy that paid him wasn't takin' any chances on Telcher's silence. And when you figure that much it ain't hard to tie up Telcher's bein' killed with Blanding's murder. That's why I'm down here again—to see if I overlooked anything that will give me a line on where Telcher stood with Blanding."

"Good reasoning, Inspector," said Cavasan. "Now will you let me go for a minute?"

"After I've had a nice long talk with you," said Burke. "And not before, kid. Now—where do we talk? In the street here, or in Blanding's apartment?" (Continued on page 111)



THEY used to be friends of yours, but you don't speak to them now. Why not? What happened? Was it your fault, or theirs—or were you all just about as foolish as these people in—

A Pot of Pansies

by LEONARD MERRICK

*who wrote "A Chair on the Boulevard,"
"While Paris Laughs," "The Man
Who Understood Women," etc.*

Illustrations by G. Patrick Nelson

BY chance this afternoon three men, who used to be firm friends, were all sitting in the Café de la Paix at the same time. They pretended not to notice one another. And tonight my thoughts keep reverting to a pot of pansies, the pot of pansies that was so great a power.

I exaggerate nothing. It is I, Pierre Camus, pressman, who affirm it.

Jacques Rouelle still struggled as a writer of short stories, and Henri Dufour was already succeeding as a playwright, but they remained as cordial as ever. No jealousy on the one side, nor pomposity on the other. Their wives, too, were on affectionate terms; in fact, the women were cousins. As for me, I was the comrade of them all. In their modest flat—a great name for two rooms—Jacques and Blanche Rouelle would read to me manuscripts, and bewail the terms Jacques got for them; and in their little villa, off the Rue Pergolèse, Henri and Elise Dufour would talk to me of some comedy that Henri was perpending, and even confide to me their discomfiture when he had one declined. Two devoted couples; five ardent friends. And then, by a stroke of fate, Jacques discovered the pot of pansies!

I had gone to see him one day, and found that he was out. Blanche, however, was at home, and Elise had just dropped in bringing a toy or something for the child. Very charming and

That was the question! Who, in that sinister house, was tending a pot of pansies—and why?

fashionable she looked, though I knew her well enough to be sure she had put on one of her shabbiest costumes for the visit. She told us that Henri had begun the penultimate act of the play on which he had been at work ever since the spring, and that he had talked of it recently to Martime, who was much attracted by the thesis. She was in high feather, and her elation was natural. Martime had produced an earlier piece of Henri's, but that had been no guarantee that he would like this one, and I knew that Henri's heart was set on his playing the leading part.

"Mind you don't forget to send Jacques and me tickets for the dress rehearsal," said Blanche blithely.

"As if we were likely to forget you! Or Pierre either," said the other, smiling to me. "Of course we don't know yet that Martime will do the piece, but he was so enthusiastic about the theme, and his part is so good, that we're pretty confident. I dare say he will want some silly alterations made, but I don't think there's much doubt about his taking it, when it's ready."

"How lovely to be able to write for the theater!" Blanche exclaimed. "Think; all the money Jacques has had from editors, with his royalties from *Contes du Quartier* as well, is not anything like as much as Henri can make with a single play! And, as if fearing that her cousin might misconstrue her plaint, she added emotionally, "Not that I grudge him his good fortune. Heaven knows!"

"I know it, too, *chérie*," responded Elise, squeezing her hand. "Jacques's innings will come. I am very sure it will come. It is atrocious that Henri and I should have all the luck in the meantime."

The vivacity seemed to be taking a solemn turn, so I put in: "And what about me? For me both your households are too wealthy—I blunder in knowing either of you. A pauper should never have rich friends."

"*Tiens!* That is a novel philosophy," said Elise inquiringly.

"It is sound. What do they yield him? At best, an invitation to dinner. Which does not compensate for the despondence he suffers in contrasting their grandeur with his garret. The poor devil of discretion associates with people even worse off than himself—and by comparison feels prosperous."

"You old humbug," they laughed at me. And addressing Blanche again, Elise Dufour said: "Wait till those dividends come rolling in! He will gnash his teeth more than ever, won't he?"

"Dividends?" said I. "What dividends? Who dares to mention dividends in front of me?"

"Ah, he hasn't heard!" cried Blanche, recovering her buoyancy. "Henri is going to get a hundred shares for Jacques in a company that is coming out. We should not be able to get them ourselves, but the man is a friend of Henri's. What do you think of it, our making investments? Isn't it great?"

"It is true," said Elise, nodding. "It will be a very good thing. Henri means to apply for quite a lot."

I could guess what it was, though not being a capitalist, I paid no heed to the Bourse and was absolutely ignorant whether Amalgamated Pancakes were heavy, or Funded Fireworks had gone up. Henri had chanced to speak of it to me. I had no doubt that Jacques might do much worse than hold a hundred shares in that concern.

"What do you think of it?" repeated Blanche. "We have been

working eight years to save three thousand francs—won't it seem wonderful to have a few francs that we haven't worked for at all coming in every year?"

She went on talking about it after Elise had gone. "It will be like something in a fairy tale, to have a little money falling regularly to us from the skies, as it were. What it will mean! Even



"Ah!" she said. "It is too petty and contemptible for words."

Henri and Elise do not know. We shall be in a position to indulge in pleasures that sound fantastic now. For instance, if Jacques is out of sorts, I shall be able to pack him off to the country to get well. Today he would not hear of such a thing—he would not touch our nest egg if he were on his last legs. And the little one! What joy to buy baby's clothes without dipping into that! To buy him perhaps a little fur coat out of money that poor Jacques has not had to whip his brains for. Won't he look sweet, the pet, dressed in dividends? I wish that you could take some shares, Pierre. But I know."

Then said: "my final" "Hei slipped kissed h three ho still thri "Ma shares I overmuc down." "But felt mor

spiring," story tha "So?" "Quite without myself in The slatt evil that well as I entering a morose d there lurk ground fl stuff was blooming fresh its incongruo Who, in t of pansies be there?

Then Jacques returned, seemingly deep in thought, and I said: "Come in and make yourself at home. Congratulations, my financial magnate."

"*Hein?*" he queried. "What? Oh, that! Yes. It had slipped my mind for the moment." He went over to his wife and kissed her tenderly. It appeared that he had been out for two or three hours, and he demanded, with deep anxiety, if the child still thrived.

"*Mais oui*, goose. He sleeps in there," said Blanche. "The shares had slipped thy mind? Ah, but listen, thou dwellest overmuch on thy work—in the end thou wilt have a breakdown."

"But no, but no, little woman. On the contrary, never have I felt more fit. I have just seen something that is positively in-

enraptured. When I reached a decent quarter, I sat down on a bench, and lit a cigarette, and prepared to welcome the delicious plot that I foresaw emerging from my reverie."

"Tell it to us," we begged him.

The fervor of Jacques's tones abated. They were flat when he replied.

"Strange to say, it did not emerge," he said. "I have not been able to find it yet."

"It will arrive," we cried, with conviction. "There should be an excellent story in that."

"Ah, certainly it will arrive! My only misgiving is that I am not worthy to treat it. It should be a gem, that story, a masterpiece. It should be a story that will live . . . All the same, it piques me that, with such stimulation to write, I should have to wait, even for an hour. I am athirst to begin."

"You will strike the idea before you go to bed," I assured him. "Even I, though fiction is not my line, can see a story there."

"You can see it?" he inquired eagerly.

"I do not mean that I see the plot. But I see the prospects."

"Ah, yes, that is how it is with me," he said. "The prospects are magnificent, aren't they? What delight I shall take in this! I may not be capable of handling it as well as it deserves, but you are going to see the best short story I have ever done, *mon vieux*."

Well, changes in the staff transferred me abruptly to London soon after that, and I had no further conversation on the subject with Jacques till nearly five months had passed. The interval had threatened to be

longer still, but one must eat. Why can't you cut an English cook's throat? If you don't know the answer, you are unaware that in

England they placidly consume anything that is put on their plates. Because there are no English cooks. I overtook him in the Champs Elysées one day, as I was on my way to call on Henri and Elise, and we strolled along together. I said: "I rather thought you

would send me a copy of that story you were speaking of before I went. What paper was it published in?"

To my amazement, he replied gloomily: "It is not written. I am seeking the plot for it."

"What?" I exclaimed. "Not written? After five months? If you could turn out other stories in the meantime, why not that one?"

"I have not turned out other stories in the meantime," he told me. "I am concentrating my imagination on the pot of pansies."

I stopped and stared at him. "*Ah, ça!* Are you in earnest? *Mon Dieu!* It looked very promising, but if you mean to spend the rest of your life trying to write it, the promise will cost you dear."

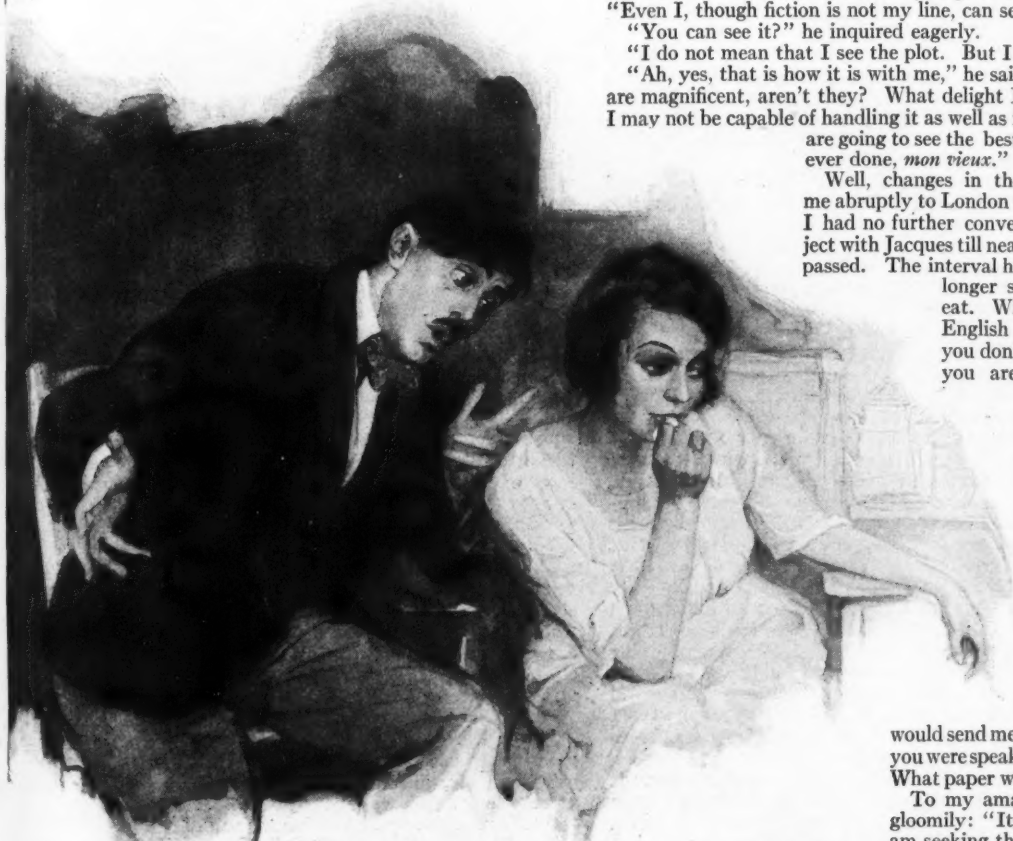
"I know it is impractical of me," he owned distressfully. "I have eaten up a pretty penny. I reproach myself. But the fascination is overwhelming. I cannot withstand it. The thing has become an obsession. I have been back a dozen times, in all weathers, to look at the house again. But the course has not advanced me. In desperation I even rang the bell and asked to see the occupant of that room, but the crone who opened the street door was either so deaf, or so artful, that it was impossible to make her understand what I said. Let us talk about it! There are only three points to resolve. Who, in a house like that, has still the sensibility to tend a pot of pansies? What does it say to her? By what circumstances is she there?"

"I remember, I remember," I said. "I am not provided with answers to such conundrums at any moment of the day. But I could have answered them in less than five months, I'll swear." I added, "If you like, I will find the plot for you in a quarter of

spiring," he announced. "I have seen a suggestion for a short story that is exquisite."

"So?" We were all attention.

"Quite by accident. I had been walking aimlessly, wandering without noting where I turned, when in the twilight I found myself in a long street of decay that struck a chill to my heart. The slatternly, forbidding houses had an air of hopelessness, of evil that made me shudder. I tried to classify the denizens, but well as I know Paris, I was baffled. I had the impression of entering a street of mysteries. It was as if, behind each of those morose darkling windows, lowering upon me in their hundreds, there lurked gruesome things. Suddenly, on the foul ledge of a ground floor window, dim with dirt, behind which some nameless stuff was looped, further to hide the secrets of the room, I saw blooming—a pot of pansies. I cannot tell you how infinitely fresh its fairness looked in these surroundings, how divinely incongruous! I stood gazing at it a full minute, lost in conjecture. Who, in that sinister house, retained the sensibility to tend a pot of pansies? What message did it yield her? How did she come to be there? '*Mon Dieu*,' I said, 'a story! A great story!' I was



an hour, sometime, when I have nothing else to do." I did not mean it very seriously, and, of course, I am a busy man.

At this juncture we saw Henri approaching—a deuce of a swell in his frock overcoat and chamois gloves, though his figure was more protuberant than it had been in the period when he was among the Great Unacted. He hailed us with: "You rascals, you negligent knaves! If you greet me once in a century, it is by chance. How are you, darlings?"

"We meant to honor you with a visit now," I said. "As it is, we will go on and see Elise. Come back and see her, too."

"Elise has gone to a *matinée*," said Henri. "You shall take a little ta-ta with me, instead. I am on topping terms with myself and need some one to listen to my boasts. I read my play to Martime this week. All is well. When I finished, tears were in his eyes."

"Good business!" We exulted hardly less than he.

"When will it be seen?" asked Jacques. "Will he make it his next production?"

"Ah, that is not settled. For that matter, he has not actually agreed to take it. But he has got the scrip, and he is to write to me in a few days. I know well enough what is going to happen: I shall have to agree that the leading woman's part ought to be less strong. And then he will tell me the play is flawless."

"You do not mind sacrificing her?"

"If I mind? Well, naturally I mind. *Mais que voulez-vous?* My primary desire is Martime. His vanity is colossal, but it is a man's play, and no other actor on the stage could do what he will do with it. I constructed it for him from the start. You may be sure I will make concessions rather than lose Martime. Ah, we are rejoicing! This piece means a great deal to us, you know—it is ambitious work. With this, if it succeeds, I—*en effet*, I am promoted to the front rank."

"You are not at the foot of the class now," I said.

"Ah! But I have written for fees, rather than for fame. It was not good enough to clothe my family in rags because I aspired to wear laurels. The day I entreated Elise to marry a boy who had not five hundred francs, I was guilty of a crime. I have never forgotten the confidence she showed in me that day—nor her unwavering belief in me while times were bad. In truth, my wife has but one failing—she admires me to excess. According to her, every word I write, or speak, is inspired. But it is not odious to be worshiped. She is adorable. I ask myself what I should do without her. They may say some of the pieces I have done so far are of no account: I assure you I have had far more joy from scribbling a farce that bought smart costumes, or a bracelet for Elise, than I could have had from evolving classics that left her worried about the washing bill. *Enfin*, everything comes at last to him who waits—even a fine day in London, *hein?* And now I have felt entitled to devote twelve months to a grand attempt. And, if it is well received—I do not romance when I say that, if it is well received, the thing that will make me proud—will be the admiration of my dear wife."

While he talked on, opening his heart to us, we strode towards the Boulevard—and as we proceeded to the Boulevard, with never a premonition of disaster, it is not hyperbolic to affirm that all Paris would have failed to display a trio more united.

Presently he inquired of Jacques: "Anything wrong with you? You are very quiet."

"I search for a plot," sighed our friend. And was long winded.

"He has been able to think of nothing but the enchanting story that ought to blossom from that flower pot, and doesn't," I explained. "By this time he might have—"

"The points I ponder are three," Jacques broke in strenuously. "Who, in such environment, has the lingering sensibility to tend a pot of pansies? What does it express to her? How does it happen that she is there?"

"I do not see anything in it," said Henri. "It has no action."

"How the devil can it have action before there is a plot?" screamed Jacques. "I tell you, the atmosphere is superb."

"It is a picture, not a story. There is no material in it," complained Henri. "You have everything to create, except the scene. The scene is good, but—"

We were still discussing the question, sipping *apéritifs* at a café, when some one exclaimed: "Ah, you! How goes it?" And, looking up, I saw that the cordial hand upon the dramatist's shoulder pertained to no less eminent a person than Martime himself.

"Numa!" Henri was delighted; the more so when Martime consented to sit down at our table and sip an *apéritif* too.

"*Permettez*. Two of my oldest friends—Monsieur Camus, of *L'Élan*, Monsieur Rouelle, *romancier*."

The actor-manager did not allow us to imagine we met upon

terms of equality, but his greetings were gracious. To be candid, I had been somewhat impressed to hear our chum call him by his Christian name. I knew, of course, that Henri was agog to learn whether a decision had been reached about his play, and I mentally applauded his air of absorption while Martime expatiated upon his performance in the present piece. After some minutes I glanced at Jacques, with a view to our leaving the pair together, but before we could move, Henri, desirous no doubt of cloaking his eagerness, said lightly:

"As you arrived, we were in the midst of a literary controversy. Monsieur Rouelle detects promise of a great story where I see none. The point is not uninteresting." Whereupon he launched into a description of the street, and did justice to the pansies, though Jacques did not look as if he thought so.

"*C'est très bien, ça*," said Martime, with weighty nods. "It is very fine, that. Let me tell you that you have there a poem." In no more authoritative a tone could the Academy have spoken.

"Ah!" cried Jacques. "You feel it, monsieur? There, in that vile spot, the fairness and fragrance of those pansies—"

"Not 'fragrance,'" said Henri, "pansies have no smell."

"—struck a note sensationally virginal," continued Jacques with defiance.

"*Oui, oui*," concurred Martime. I suppose it was no trouble to him to do these things, but the ideality he threw into his eyes was worth money to see. We all regarded him intently, and I think he liked the situation. Even more ideality flooded his gaze, and he propped a temple with two fingers. "I am not of your opinion, *mon cher*," he told Henri profoundly. "I find it admirable."

"The three questions that besieged one, monsieur," burst forth Jacques—and I shuddered—"are: Who, bidding amid decay, has the imperishable sensibility to tend a pot of pansies? Of what does it speak to her? How comes it that she is there?"

And now it was that the famous man was tempted to a fall.

"*Tout à fait admirable*," he repeated. "But"—he displayed a cautionary palm—"above all, no melodrama! The keynote is simplicity. Simplicity and tenderness. For example, in the squalid room sits a young girl, refined though poor—a seamstress. She dreams always of the countryside that she has left, and the lover who is seeking for her. And—it would be very charming—one day the lover passes the window while she waters the pansies."

"Oh, my dear Numa, bosh!" exclaimed Henri genially.

No sooner had he said it than he recognized his error, I am sure. Martime's eyes flashed poniards, and his face turned turnip color with offense. Perceiving his indignation, Jacques began to stammer hasty insincerities, and Henri also did his utmost to palliate the affront, but I could not persuade myself that their efforts were successful. For a minute or two Martime remained stiff and monosyllabic, and then, with a few formal words, got up and went.

"I fear he was annoyed," murmured Jacques.

"You 'fear!'" said Henri irascibly. I was dismayed to hear resentment in his tone.

Though Martime had gone, the constraint continued; and it was not long before we rose.

As Henri and I walked on, after Jacques had parted from us, I said: "Very stupid of Martime. You spoke in quite a friendly way."

"And still more stupid of Jacques to talk about the story to him," he flung back, at white heat. "What possible interest could Jacques's difficulties have for Martime? Childish!"

"But—pardon me, it was you who first mentioned the matter," I said.

"Ah, don't split straws," he growled. Clearly, the incident disturbed him more than a little.

It was probably a week or ten days afterwards that Jacques came to me in great perturbation and volleyed: "What do you think? Henri has got his knife into me! It appears that Martime has returned the play, and Henri says it is my fault."

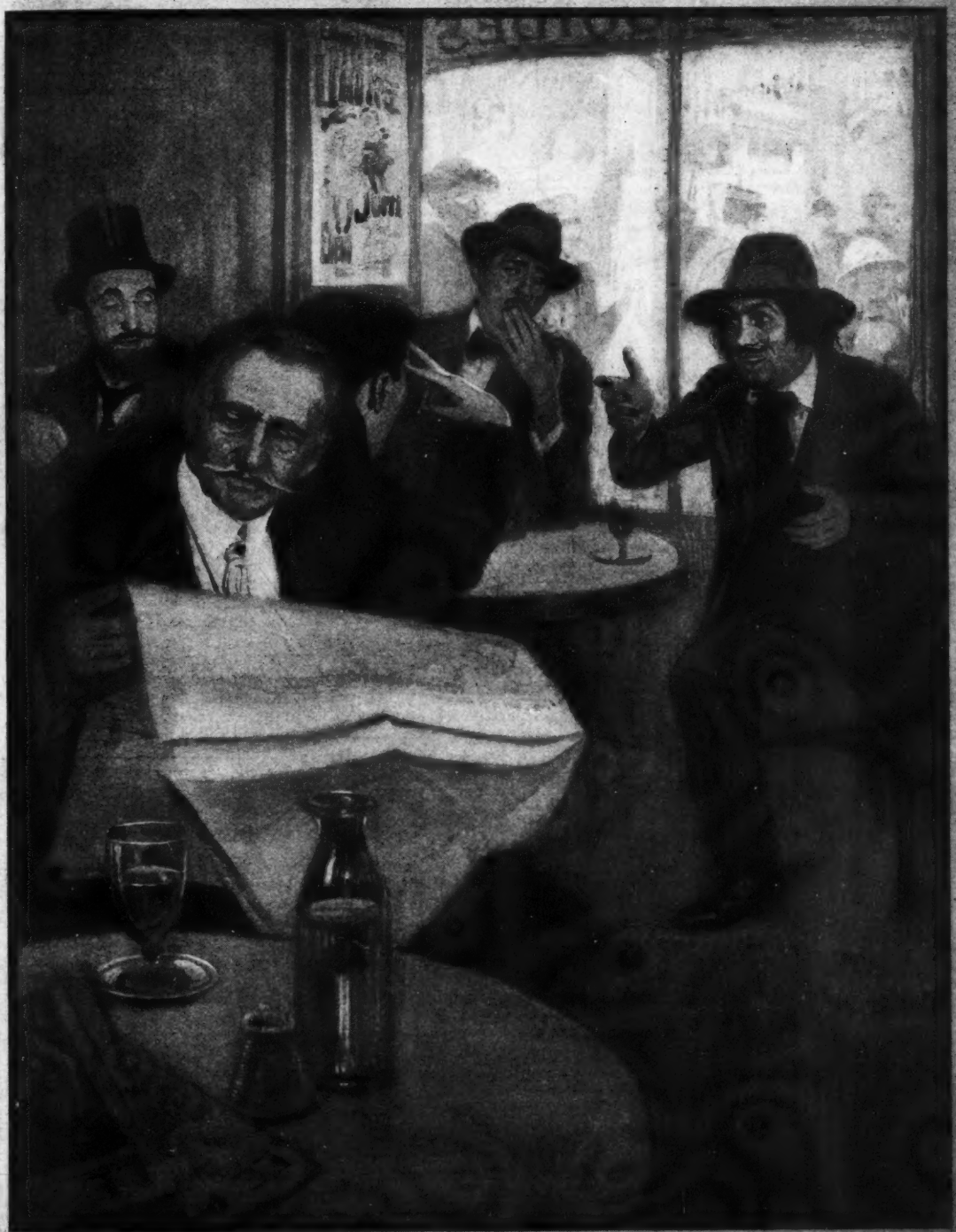
"Oh, nonsense!" I said. "How can he say that? Returned the play? I am dreadfully sorry."

"I, too. But what have I got to do with it? Did you ever hear anything more preposterous? To begin with, it is not likely that Martime would refuse the piece solely on account of what was said that day; and even if he did so, it was not I who said it. It wasn't till yesterday I knew there was anything wrong. Blanche met Elise. Elise's manner was rather strange, and Blanche wondered. But she had no idea there was any ill feeling. Naturally. She inquired if Henri had heard from Martime yet. Then it came out."

"That Henri held you responsible?"

"Blanche was condoling; she said, 'What a cruel disappointment for you both, dear!'" And Elise said coldly, 'Yes, indeed;

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"Ah!" cried Jacques. "You feel it, monsieur?" "Oh, bosh!" yawned Henri genially.

it is very unfortunate that Jacques discussed his affairs in front of Martime.' Blanche, poor girl, was thunderstruck. Of course she explained to Elise exactly what had happened. But Elise replied with something very vague, and when I telephoned to Henri, he was not himself with me at all—he was very brusque. He said, 'I have no wish to talk about the matter.' There is not the least doubt that he is angry."

"I will have a chat with him," said I.

I went the following day. But he had gone to have a Turkish bath, and Elise, who received me, begged me not to mention the play when I saw him. "His finest work, that took him a year to do, practically wasted!" she said, in a stunned fashion. "It is frightful. He is stricken. It would be kinder of you

not to say anything about it to him yet awhile. I'll tell him that you came."

"But 'practically wasted'?" I demurred. "He will be able to place it with some other management, will he not?"

"He may. But it is not the kind of play for every management. And, anyhow, we shall not get Martime in the part. It will never now be the immense success that it would have been. What an idiot to reject a great part because his vanity was wounded!"

"You are certain that is the explanation?"

"There is no question about it. The scrip was returned in the most formal way—a line to say it was 'unsuitable.' Henri was prostrate. Prostrate. My poor Henri! You may realize what a blow it was. I am feeling very anxious (Continued on page 110)

Stories That Have

by

MONTAGUE
GLASS



AN American was traveling in a first class carriage of an English railway train and the only other occupant of the compartment was an Englishman. It was not a smoking compartment, but after obtaining permission from his fellow traveler, the American proceeded to light up and enjoy a cigar. At the next stop another Englishman entered. He threw his luggage up into the rack and sat down opposite the American.

"I say!" he said immediately. "This is not a smoking compartment, you know."

"I know it isn't, but this gentleman has no objection to smoking, and neither have I, so you're in a minority of one," the American said.

"Oh, I *am*, am I?" the conscientious objector retorted. "Well, we'll see about that."

He pulled the cord for the guard and in a few minutes the guard appeared.

"I'm sorry, sir," he said, "but you'll have to stop smoking if this gentleman objects."

"But what right has he to object?" the American said. "He's traveling in this first class compartment on a third class ticket."

The guard demanded to see the objector's ticket, and sure enough, it was a third class ticket, with the result that at the next station he was ejected from the compartment and his name and address taken with a view to a criminal prosecution.

"Excuse my asking," the first Englishman said after they were once more alone together, "but how the deuce did you know he was traveling in this first class compartment on a third class ticket?"

"Well, when he put his handbag up into the rack, I saw his ticket sticking out of his waistcoat pocket," the American replied, "and it's the same color as mine."

IN the unregenerate eighteen nineties when beer was a beverage and not a therapeutic agent, Zim, the comic draughtsman, had a picture in *Judge* showing the happy family life of a contented hodcarrier.

The father is seated in a chair, smoking a pipe, his face buried in the evening paper. The mother is guiding the first footsteps of their infant son.

"Look, Mike," she says proudly, "little Patsey can walk."

The father never raises his eyes from the paper.

"Send him down to Casey's for a pint," he says.



THESE are no doubt apocryphal instances, but Hy Mayer, the cartoonist, told me a short time ago that he took a friend of many years' standing to the Lambs Club for luncheon. While they were at the *demi tasse* and cigar stage of the meal Frank Keenan, the well-known actor, came over to Hy's table, and Hy said that although he had known Keenan for years and could have mentioned on the spot the title of every play in which Keenan had appeared and the Christian and surnames of the characters enacted by Keenan in those plays, such

was the trick Hy's memory served him that he could not at that moment remember the Christian and surnames of Keenan himself. He wanted to introduce Keenan to his friend, and an embarrassing five minutes ensued before somebody passed by and called out: "Hello, Frank!"

"Oh, Mr. Keenan!" Hy said immediately. "I would like very much to have you meet my friend, Mister—er—"

"And then," Hy concluded, "I forgot my friend's name."



A CHICAGO schoolboy in the course of an examination in American history was asked to name the general commanding the Union Army at the Battle of Gettysburg. According to the late B.L.T.'s column in the Chicago Tribune, he replied as follows:

The name of the Union General in the Battle of Gettysburg was General Pitcher. His wife Molly Pitcher was there too. She seized a hold of a soldier's gun and said: Shoot if you must this old gray head.

FEW men have such tricky memories as the Englishman who asked his wife at breakfast: "My dear, who was the chap that was telling us the other day about—er—let me see—what was it?"

Although, of course, there was the well-known artist who said: "I have such a wretchedly poor memory of late. In fact, there are two things that I always forget: one of them is names, and the other one is—er—I forget what the other one is."

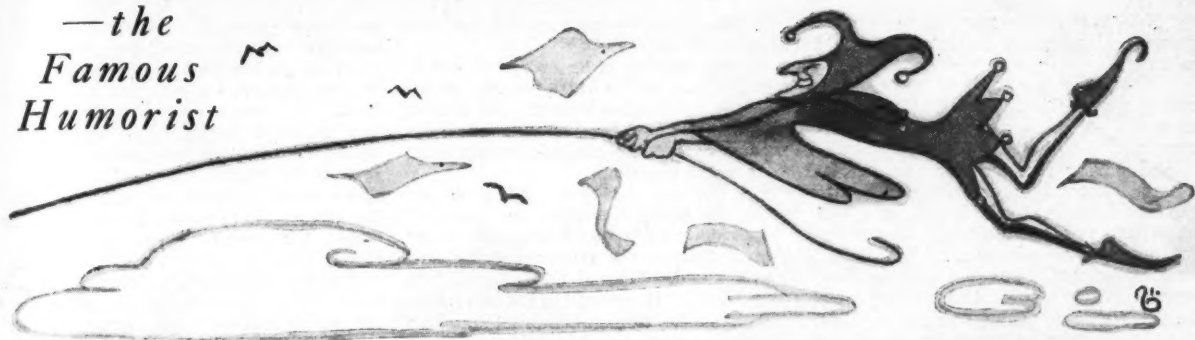
AN emaciated seaman was admitted to the Marine Hospital on Staten Island suffering from some wasting disease. He was mere skin and bone, hollow-chested and shrunken, and submitted to a physical examination in a listless manner. "What is that blue mark on your chest?" the physician asked. "A bruise?"

"Bruise nothing," the invalid replied. "I wasn't always this way, you know. I weighed two hundred and fifty pounds and had a chest expansion of five inches, and when I drew a deep breath that there blue mark spread out into a ship in full sail and two clasped hands with the words, 'Mizpah. The Lord watch between you and me when we are far apart.'"



Made Me Laugh

—the
Famous
Humorist



FOOTIT, the well-known clown of the Nouveau Cirque, was telling in his little restaurant on the Rue de Montaigne of a dog he once owned which could never accustom itself to the nomadic life of a circus dog. It continually tried to behave in the fashion of canine friends who had fixed places of abode.

"For instance," Footit told me, "it would bury a bone

by the side of the center pole in the main tent at Saint Louis, Missouri, and try to dig it up again in Cincinnati, Ohio."

PRIOR to the enactment of the Volstead Law and the acts amendatory thereof, a traveling man stood up against the bar in a small town hotel and boasted of the strange and far-off places he had visited, and even some that he hadn't visited. He told of hair's-breadth escapes in the desert, of encounters with poisonous reptiles and ferocious animals, of flood, fire and shipwreck, with a couple of lynchings thrown in for good measure. So interested was his audience that nobody in that barroom took a drink during the entire narrative except one small man who not only took drinks during the narrative, but obviously had been taking them long before the narrative had begun. He seemed in a hazy sort of way to deprecate all that the traveling man said, and at last he summoned up sufficient courage to interrupt the traveling man just as the latter was midway in an adventure with a giant cuttlefish which took place while he and the cuttlefish were bathing together off the coast of Yucatan.

"Excuse me, sir," the small man said, "but have you ever had delirium tremens?"

"Have I ever had what?" the traveling man asked.

"Delirium tremens," the small man said firmly—or rather as firmly as anybody can say delirium tremens who is more familiar with its symptoms than its pronunciation.

"Certainly not," the traveling man replied, "I never had delirium tremens in my whole life."

"Then," the small man declared positively, "you ain't been nowheres, and you ain't seen nothing."

A MR. RASHKIND, in the cloak and suit business, recently became a widower at a stage in his matrimonial affairs when if he had not been first called upon to pay funeral expenses, he most certainly would have been stung for alimony. However, he sought to create the impression that a happy married life had just been brought to an untimely close by giving such an excellent imitation of a heartbroken husband that some of his most intimate friends were deceived by it. A few days after the funeral he met Sam Minsker, who shook him sympathetically by the hand.

"Nu, Rashkind," Sam said, "I hope you are feeling better and that you are now looking at this here matter from philosophy."

Rashkind treated Sam to a long drawn out, tremulous sigh.

"Tell me, Sam," he said, "was you to the funeral?"

"I was to the services at the house,"

Sam replied, "and the way you carried on, Rashkind, I give you my word, I thought you had gone off your head, which of course it's a big misfortune you had it and everything, but at the same time, Rashkind, the way you acted there, honestly, I was ashamed for the people, such a big *geschrei* you made."

Rashkind could barely conceal a satisfied smile.

"At the house you says it was that I acted this way?" he asked.

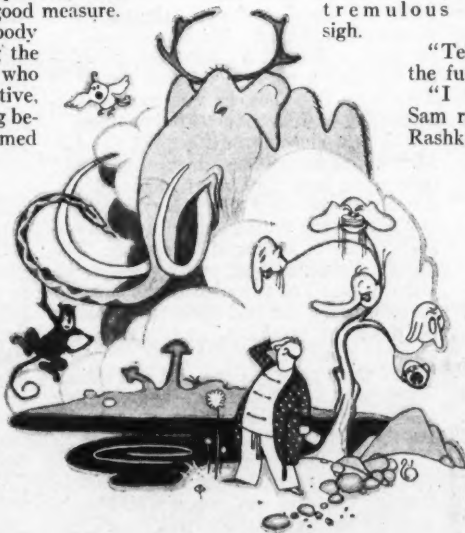
"Sure at the house," Sam said, "at the cemetery I didn't see you, on account I am *Gott sei dank* so busy I couldn't go out to the cemetery."

"What!" Rashkind exclaimed. "You didn't go out to the cemetery?"

"No," Sam said. "I couldn't make it."

Rashkind flipped the fingers of his right hand in a gesture of disappointment.

"Achl!" he said. "You should ought to have gone out to the cemetery. That's where I raised hell."



All Their Cards on the Table

(Continued from page 48)

"Never sorry you married me—never, even the least mite, think you made a mistake?"

"What a question! You know you're asking silly rubbish. Now trot off to bed, so you'll be feeling yourself again in the morning."

And having received her answer, Zoë loitered a second longer, then went across the moonlit sward to the house. Her husband felt vaguely disturbed about her, but no acute uneasiness at all. Presently he discovered his cigar had gone out and, searching for matches and finding none, he went in to get some from Louis. Just outside the door he suddenly paused, for he heard voices—a low murmur, undertones almost—the voices of Louis and his wife, Zoë's low-pitched but agitated and Louis's reassuring and sibilantly-hushed—a hurried, secret-sounding conversation!

Even as he hesitated, the whole thing lasting not a second, he heard the soft swishing of skirts and Zoë's foot on the stair, and Louis's heavy tread returning to the barroom. When Mart, after a purposed delay, entered and asked for the matches, the old fellow appeared just as usual, jovial and unperturbed. Mart had to restrain himself from asking about that conference in the hall—caught himself just in time. Later, outdoors again, he told himself that sudden constraint had been silly. Why shouldn't he have mentioned it, outright?

Trying to bring back his former mood of relaxed ease, he told himself that, as soon as he went upstairs, he'd put the question, in a casual and normal way. But he didn't. For, when he finally followed her, something else had arisen to crowd, temporarily, that mysterious interview with Louis from his mind.

Zoë hadn't heard him coming, purposelessly stepping noiselessly lest he might wake her from sleep. She was sitting by the open window of her room, her elbows on the window sill and gazing out at the night. She had switched off the electric light, and the light from a candle on her dresser was shining on her hair, her cheek, her soft blue robe.

The picture was so pretty, Zoë in that soft candle shine, that he hated to disturb it; but he didn't realize how disturbing to Zoë would prove the news he had brought to announce.

"Guess who just drove up downstairs," he said—"Bingo Sayles, with a sort of roystering party."

She gazed up at him with a blind, horrified kind of look; her hands went to her throat, then swiftly dropped.

"Bingo Sayles—here! Oh, dear heaven, this is too much!"

Her husband stared at her in speechless amazement. Then, seeing his look, as if suddenly conscious of the strangeness of her ejaculation, she seemed to make an effort to pull herself together; made her tone sound fairly even as she went on:

"I thought this quiet spot would be free from Bingo Sayleses—what on earth is he doing in this out of the way place?"

"It isn't so out of the way—it's on the state road after all. I'm afraid we can't put an exclusive claim on it. In fact two

other motor parties have arrived this evening beside Sayles's."

He was talking in an everyday sort of manner, but, in his heart, he was asking why she should have been so upset at that mention of Bingo Sayles; and, for all his practical front, he couldn't refrain from voicing the question.

But Zoë only shrugged. "Well, do you want him here?—he spoils the picture."

He couldn't help considering that, at the best, a vague sort of answer, a sort of putting him off. Why should she want to put him off? He wanted to ask her. But, on the point of asking, he hesitated. This wasn't their way of doing things, wasn't in accordance with their compact.

Now, of constraint other, uglier things may be born; and Mart found it hard to get to sleep that night. Things he had seen and heard at first scarcely noticing, kept whirling and circling, strangely interweaving and jumbling together in his head. He recalled Zoë's change of manner since their very arrival: her first hesitation at the "surprise" stopover, her unnatural manner throughout the evening, fluttering from abstraction to gaiety too stressed, her first avoidance of Louis—he recalled that now—and then that later brief, almost furtive interview.

His twisting, tangling thoughts deflected to Bingo Sayles. Hang the fellow, anyway! he'd always detested him—the sleek, good-looking, woman chasing bounder! Devilish, the hold a fellow like that had over women. Of course Zoë had thrown off completely what spell he'd ever had over her—but why had she burst out like that, upon hearing of Sayles's arrival here?

Finally, unable to get to sleep, he arose and dragged a chair to the window. He sat there a long time.

Presently, Mart went back to bed. He felt something of a fool—felt he was making more ado about nothing than befits the dignity of man, the superior, more rational biped. His reason could fix on nothing definite for his uneasy mood—he was like a nervous woman, damn it! Yet, damn it or not, he was conscious of something in him akin to premonition.

The next morning, as if helping to fulfill Mart's prognostications, dawned gray and overcast; a high wind scurried the clouds, tormented the river yesterday so placid, and banged the shutters against the house. Mart awoke to a sense of depression. This wasn't lightened, naturally, when he learned that Zoë's headache was worse—much worse. She said she wasn't able to go down to breakfast, and Martin descended alone.

And then, already depressed and ridiculously—as he considered—apprehensive and jumpy, he ran smack into that damning thing of the necklace.

He had gone into the barroom for a "pick me up" before breakfast (and a morning "bracer" was so rare with Martin as to be significant this morning) and, as he stood watching Louis pour the drink, his eyes chanced to fall on an object lying on the back bar. It was an open box and lying inside it, exposed, was a necklace—an odd Chinese looking thing of soft yellow gold and jade. Surely he had

seen that unusual trinket before!—it was identically like one Zoë used to wear, years ago, in her Washington Square days. Merely astonished at first, not stopping to think—not yet having had time to put two and two together, he impulsively leaned over and reached for the box. But, just as he reached, something impelled him to turn his head and he encountered the gaze of Bingo Sayles; he was standing across the room; Sayles said nothing, merely met his own eyes, but that silent and suave gaze had an inimitable insolence. What did Sayles know? Then, still saying nothing, Sayles turned and left the room; and, somehow, that exit, somehow savoring of the discreet, was more insolent even than that half amused, half contemptuous urbanity of the fellow's eyes. *Did Sayles know the secret?—know why that necklace was here?*

The whole thing had happened so quickly—the veriest fraction of a second—that his hand was still extended in air when Mart, now concretely thinking, now conscious of a quick surge of fear, turned his head and encountered a glance from old Louis. The old chap dropped his eyes swiftly—he looked confused.

"Where'd you get that necklace?" demanded Mart, that rush of panicky dread making him forget caution, tact.

Old Louis began to mumble something; he pushed forward the drink, mumbling, incoherent; evidently he hadn't meant the necklace to be seen, was distressed, embarrassed, befuddled, because he'd left it where it had been seen; he mumbled something, with unintelligible French phrases intermingling about its having been left at the inn years before—it had never been called for or sent for—he had all but forgotten it—had just chanced upon it in the safe and taken it out—he couldn't even recall, now, who'd likely left it—it was a pretty piece, not very valuable, but pretty—evidently the owner hadn't thought much of it, not ever to call for it—

He was still mumbling, speaking rapidly, unintelligibly in an effort to hide his confusion, when Mart interrupted him.

"Well, since the owner's never claimed it—evidently doesn't want it—I'd like to buy it."

"Eh?" bleated out old Louis, startled. "I'd like to buy it," repeated Mart, maintaining that commendable quietude. "As you say it's very pretty—unique."

Old Louis, staring at him, was almost grotesque in his anxious befuddlement as to what to say or do. Benumbed, paralyzed as he was at that minute, benumbed and paralyzed at this discovery which meant heaven knew what, Mart could not help feeling a rush of warm gratitude toward the old Alsatian—the old chap evidently wished to befriend Zoë, to protect her; evidently had intended getting the lost trinket into her hands privately—that may have been one thing they were whispering about last night!—had laid it out for this purpose and, then, had been nonplused, had lost his head, at the sudden appearance of himself, the husband.

"Yes, it's very pretty," he repeated, making himself lean forward again, and pick up the necklace. He made himself examine it. "My wife will like it."

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The happiness you wish us—
The truest word we've ever heard
For soup that's just delicious!



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Then, because of that warm feeling toward the old chap, wishing to ease him out of his "state" at once, he made himself go on to say: "But I'd like to arrange it some way so she won't know it came from me—not at present, anyway; let me think." Out of the corner of his eye he saw the old chap's look of dawning relief. He made himself use that substitute for thinking, made himself proceed:

"Let's see—how would it be for you just to present it with your compliments—you might say it's been left here and you were waiting to present it to some lady who could use it and whom it suited—yes, that would please her, I think." Then, as the old fellow still looked a little uncertain, dubious, though relieved: "It will be all right—later I'll explain to her, of course, but just at present I'd prefer—it'll be quite all right, I assure you."

His tone, his manner, even that smile he summoned, must have reassured the old Alsatian despite his puzzlement, for with rather pathetic eagerness he took possession of the trinket and volunteered to carry out the husband's scheme.

Mart had a difficult time making a pretense of breakfast; he essayed the pretense because Bingo Sayles, with his hilariously merry party, was seated across the room. How was he, presently, going to face her without showing anything?—what was going to happen when he faced her?

As it turned out, nothing happened—which made things only more insupportable and dreadful still. For, when finally he gathered his courage to mount the stairs, to enter her room, she made no mention of receiving the trinket—and he knew that old Louis had already presented it. She answered his queries about her headache, asked about his breakfast—hatefully normal and casual remarks—and then asked to be left alone; she was going to take a headache powder and try to get a nap.

When he left her, she said, "I'm all right, dear—don't worry about me," but he noticed that she kept her eyes—those beautiful slate-colored eyes that had never shown aught but truth to him—averted, even as she kissed him.

And so began, for Mart Haven and his wife, a period of subterfuge, wariness, torment and acting.

Mart, took his black fears, his growing torment out into the sullen, threatening open. The wind was now a gale. He had not known, before, that the wind was such a lonely thing—it seemed to cleave its sadness into his very bones; and the dark sad clouds it drove above the hills and river, they, too, seemed to sweep in a tragic loneliness through the upper air.

But as yet all was vague; he kept telling himself that his torment was based on nothing concrete, incriminating; kept telling himself that soon she would speak, explain everything, justify everything, resolving this apparently deceitful tangle into a ridiculous simplicity—and that, then, they would laugh at his foolish fears, together.

But, when he saw her next, she did not speak; and the tangle, when it seemed to unsnarl itself, swiftly took on other complications, so ugly, so cruel, so disastrous, that Martin Haven did not see how he was going to endure his despair.

Things began to happen, to clarify and

to further ensnarl—that ugly, dreadful unveiling of fact which moved so ruthlessly, speedily to its unforeseen *dénouement*, almost at once, at luncheon.

Zoë, bravely—for Mart perceived that she was really ill—had decided to go downstairs for the meal. And, then, as he had foreseen she would and as he had known she had foreseen also, she encountered Bingo Sayles face to face. For the rain had held over Sayles's merry party. They were all seated, a slightly too boisterous group, at their table when Martin and his wife entered the dining room. Bows were exchanged; and then, after awhile, as Martin had known he would—and a natural enough, warrantable enough act it was, too—Sayles rose and sauntered over to the Havens' table.

"Quaint little place, isn't it?—staying long?" And then: "Your husband says you've never been here before."

Mart's loathing of the man increased because of the uncalled-for cruelty. How cruel it was he couldn't doubt, for he caught a glance from Zoë; just one flight of the eyes and then an even swifter withdrawal—but he'd never forget it; he could only hope that Sayles hadn't had the satisfaction of catching that swift, helpless flash of sheer terror.

Mart made some passable rejoinder. But, within, he was thinking: "The hound!—I'd like to kill him with my two bare fists!" And also thinking: "How long must I sit here?—how long can I bear to sit here?"

After luncheon Zoë complained her headache was worse—and Mart did not wonder. But still keeping up that shield of wariness, of subterfuge, he saw her up to her room.

When he returned downstairs the Sayles party was preparing to depart, for the weather was clearing; he heard them chattering and laughing in their car drawn before the front entrance, and unobtrusively he stole into a little back passage which ran behind the barroom, to a side door. In this passage a little window let in on the barroom; through the opening he heard Bingo Sayles's voice, confidential, persuasive:

"Come now, Louis: the pretty lady upstairs—Mrs. Haven—she's been here before, hasn't she?"

Mart stood riveted, petrified, strained, incredulous—who could blame him? Evidently old Louis was noncommittal, for that confidential voice persisted:

"Oh, come on—I won't bleat it—mum's the word! Just have a hunch and want to verify it. Who was she up here with?—bet you a fiver I can describe him: tall, dark chap, rather romantic looking—Irish; mop of black hair, black hair artistic looking—that the fellow?"

Mart, out there in the hall, rooted, his ears straining, felt cold waves of additional horror freeze him cold; Bingo Sayles wasn't the man!—it was still *another!* it was—

In there in the barroom Sayles was giving a little satisfied chuckle of a laugh.

"Oh, well, be a clam then—you don't have to tell me—you should study facial control, Louis!" He chuckled again. "So that's how it was, was it?—I had the hunch all right. It's the devil," he continued, "how it takes these respected honorable gentlemen of chivalry, righteousness

and what not to get away with the goods. They get away with murder!"

Sayles sauntered out to join his party and, presently, after their motor had whirled up and then chugged off into distance, Mart crept out of his skulking place and into the brightening outdoors. Blindly, not knowing where he was going, he struck off toward the wooded hills. Unsteadily, seeing nothing plain, unaware of where his feet led him, he ploughed through the wet grass and leaves, stumbled along the moss-carpet trail which follows the brook up to its source at the top of the mountain. He was oblivious to the world about him—because the world had tottered, had crashed in ruins. Zoë, his wife, whom he'd trusted—And not alone Bingo Sayles, whom, in some dark closet of his head he'd always jealously detested; not that slick yellow pup only—but the man she'd praised for his high sense of friendship—Dennis O'Neill, the "chivalrous, the honorable." Martin laughed aloud harshly; gad, but she'd pulled the wool over his eyes, played him skillfully, expertly for a fool—with those soft candid eyes of hers and those sweet, frank speeches!

Thus he whipped up his fury as he lashed his way on up the trail. Presently he emerged on the grassy level where the waterfall, the parent of the noisy little brook, slides with a soft roar over its sheer drop of rock; he had blissfully purposed to bring Zoë to view this scene—to show her the spectacle she'd already enjoyed with another man! In his sick misery he lay prone on the wet ground, conjuring and envisaging repellent images—

But after awhile that steady, crisp sound of sliding water, that muffled and gentle roar, began gradually to seep through to his tortured heart—began somehow to comfort his racking pain. A sort of tranquillity seeped into him, not a bright or joyous, tranquillity but a feeling though mournful yet gently sad. He recalled her tender manner and words, her kindnesses, those soft comradely eyes—those unforgettable eyes which never would he see again shining with the old warm candor and truth! He felt that, now, all the world he'd ask would be to have it back: that sweet and precious comradeship so doubly sweet and prized now that it was gone.

When, finally, he went back down that mossy trail that hugged the brook, all his burning, torturesome emotion had utterly gone—all emotion, all capacity for emotion, seemed burned out of him forever; he did not suffer, his anger no longer flamed, he moved along in a sort of numb, painless swoon. Never had he experienced anything of that sort: this aching sensation of emptiness, of gnawing emptiness in himself and around him everywhere—which was yet not so much a gnawing as just emptiness. And he kept saying to himself: "I will be calm—I will keep myself in hand—I will show nothing and let her take the lead—oh, God, what will she do?"

And, then, when he entered the hotel, ascended the staircase, and noiselessly let himself into his own room, he discovered that she had already taken that lead, what she purposed to do.


For, slipped under the connecting door between their rooms, showed the white oblong of a note. Mart was trembling as he stopped to pick it up, trembling as he carried it over to the window. For a



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minute he held it fearfully, afraid to open it, to read what it contained. And then, with blurred vision, he read:

"Please come to me as soon as you read this, Mart. There's something I must tell you. But first—before you come—right now—I must tell you one thing: I've deceived you. I'm writing this much—now—because it's easier to write it than to tell it to your face—I don't believe I could force myself to say it to your face—simply couldn't bear to see disillusionment—coldness and dislike and hatred maybe—come into your dear, kind eyes. That's why I'm writing this much—that I've deceived you—so I can't turn cowardly and back out. The rest I'll tell you when you come. But, as you have kindness in your heart, Mart, when you read this come quickly—because I've been living—am living—in hell. I can't stand it much longer."

Presently, after seconds or hours he couldn't have told, he went and knocked on her door, obeyed her invitation to enter.

Fighting for that steeled composure, he saw her but indistinctly, but he sensed that her face was white and drawn, her eyes unnaturally big and dark and blurred. But her voice was surprisingly even, mechanically measured almost, and monotonously without cadence or color, as she advanced to meet him, and said:

"You have shown your true kindness by coming—thank you, Mart. But it's only what I might have expected of you—entirely in character—but I was afraid you might—"

"Hadn't we better sit down?" suggested her husband.

She seated herself; he took another chair across the room.

"Now," said Mart, in a voice he deemed controlled and unprejudiced, "just what is it you wish to tell me?"

And then, slowly and painfully at first, and then in a quickening, incoherent flood as she proceeded, she poured it all out. She had deceived him—that was the worst part, the terrible thing. For the thing itself, the thing she'd withheld from him, wasn't really so bad—it really wasn't. It was really so trivial that she'd persuaded herself it wasn't wrong to withhold it when she'd made that pretense of telling him everything. For she had *wanted* to tell him everything—had been genuinely honest in that—surely he believed this—

And Mart, meeting her beseeching gaze impassively, with that air of a determinedly impartial judge, answered: "That's what I wanted to believe, of course."

She made no protest; just swallowed once, as if words were an effort, then rushed on again.

"Yes, you told me you and O'Neill were in love with each other," affirmed her husband stolidly.

Zoë nodded, without equivocation.

Yes, they had been in love; and that was why, when they realized their situation, they'd decided to break off even the friendship. The credit went mostly to Dennis, she admitted. Dennis was the most honorable man in the world. (Martin shivered.) But he was married—had that little boy; and, being what he was, Dennis could never have done anything actually wrong or dishonorable. So they decided to break their intimacy completely

off—that was the only way. But, just before the break—

She paused, took a long breath. Mart became even more taut, looked a figure of stone, or iron. She proceeded:

Oh, it was utterly mad, insane—yet innocent and beautiful! Not one in a million could ever understand it. One day—it was in June (she shuddered at this juncture, and Martin, her husband, observing, shuddered inwardly, too, though outside he didn't let emerge a quiver.) A warm golden day of June—halcyon weather—and they started out—it was a Saturday afternoon—in Dennis's car. His family was at the seashore, and they thought to have just one little farewell drive together. Just a little drive—that was all they intended. Then, out of that glorious day, the halcyon weather, out of something in the air—that elusive, transitory bright beauty of romance that's so beautiful just because it can never last—out of this and out of Dennis's responsiveness to it all—and her responsiveness to his responsiveness—

Oh, she could never describe it, never make it clear—not just in words! It wasn't a thing to put in words—it was feeling, a matter of mood. And because the two of them were as they were. And about to say good by. But no harm in it—not one iota of actual, intentional harm. They had driven on and on and on, scarcely aware of where they were going—no definite goal at all, no definite intention—when, finally, they came to this inn—Louis's—this very place. And it looked so beautiful in the sunset, so sort of unreal and make-believe, so in accord with that whole beautiful day, that Dennis had suddenly had his utterly mad idea. They'd stop here—stay overnight—enjoy the next day together, all alone and shut off from the world, in this remote and unbelievably lovely spot. Then, the next afternoon, they would go back to the world and to their diverging lines of duty. (Mart, listening, made no movement, was still a figure carved of iron.)

But there was no harm—no intention of harm; not one in a million could comprehend—no one but Dennis could ever have conceived such a notion—carried it through. But somehow, just then, under Dennis's spell—under the spell of everything—it hadn't seemed so mad; had seemed to her perfectly feasible. They registered as brother and sister—indeed, might as well have been brother and sister. And it *was* beautiful—she'd never forget that Sunday—wandering through the woods, following the brook—sitting up there by the waterfall—

Then, that late afternoon, they started back home. Went back home. It was their last expedition together. The days which followed were not happy ones—for she was no longer seeing Dennis—and she was in love with him. Not for some time did she notice even that she'd lost her necklace somewhere—that antique Chinese necklace Dennis had given her and which she used to wear so much—did Mart remember?

"I remember," said Mart.

She feared she might have lost it on that motor trip—might even have left it at the inn. But she feared to make inquiries—and hated to disturb Dennis, especially as she was no longer seeing him. She feared to make inquiries because, now, out

from under the brief enchantment of that mad day, she began to perceive how utterly mad it had been; how misinterpreted, how disastrous even, her rash act might have been. So she said nothing about the necklace, and, as time went by, thanked her lucky stars that that wild adventure had never come to light.

And then, last night—was it only last night?—such centuries it seemed!—he, Mart, had brought her to this selfsame place! Thinking to "surprise" her—well, he could imagine what kind of "surprise" it had been. And, right then, she'd begun to pay her penalty—to pay for all the folly she'd ever been guilty of. Oh, the torture of it! First the burning knowledge of her deceit, the dread of meeting Louis—for some reason, though he'd really recognized her, he had been kind to her and had even returned the necklace—Louis was a dear, kind old man. Then the appearance of Bingo Sayles; not that she'd considered his presence ominous, at first; merely an added trial when she was already at her nerves' end and suffering; but, later, she'd suspected he *knew* something—today, at luncheon—

"Oh, it's been more than I could bear!" She covered her face with her hands, the first breakdown she had evinced throughout that long recital. Then she took down her hands, looked at him piteously. "I've been in hell, Mart. I couldn't stand it any longer. I thought, at first, that I could carry it through—but I couldn't, I *couldn't* . . . couldn't bear it any longer."

In the level westerly light from the window her face looked white, and small, and pinched, but her eyes only the larger, the more pathetically appealing, mutely beseeching him to understand, to say he understood and forgave.

But Mart, for a minute that might have been an hour, said nothing. When at last he spoke his voice sounded dull.

"This is the truth, Zoë—the absolute and entire truth? You swear it?"

"Oh, Mart!" Her eyes seemed to grow larger and blacker in that mute, beseeching appeal. "Don't you *know* it's the truth?"

Zoë rose from her chair, took a step toward the window, then half turned and half put out a hand, involuntarily yet as though unconsciously hoping he might see it and press it; but he sat as though rooted to his chair. She waited a moment then, listlessly, draggingly, moved on toward the window.

"Another thing," said her husband, speaking at last. "Last night—when we first came here—when you saw where we'd come—why didn't you tell me *then*?"

Zoë dropped her head. "Because—" she said. She dropped her head still lower, her hands went against the window ledge for support. "Because—" she tried again. "It was so hard, Mart—I guess it was so hard because—I love you so much."

Well, I said earlier in this narrative that when Zoë Burnham married Martin Haven her acquaintances were surprised that such a girl as she had contracted so unemotional, so unromantic a marriage. But who shall say when a marriage is emotionless, unromantic—who knows its deep and full potentialities?—There, in the vivid western glow of the triumphantly emergent sun, Mart Haven held his wife close in his arms— Never again, perhaps,

Your skin needs two different creams at different times



For the nightly cleansing, only Pond's Cold Cream, the cream made with oil, will do



In the daytime, use Pond's Vanishing Cream, the dry cream made without oil, to protect your skin against wind and dust

For daytime use — the cream that will not reappear in a shine

A TIRED looking skin adds years to a woman's age. To freshen the skin instantly, use the cream made without oil. You can put it on just before you go out, for there is nothing in it which could reappear in a shine.

Take a bit of Pond's Vanishing Cream and smooth it lightly in with an upward motion. The dullness, the flat unbecoming tones disappear—your complexion takes on a new freshness and transparency.

When you powder, do it to last. The perpetual powdering that most women do is so unnecessary. Here is the satisfactory way to

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This cream is so delicate that it can be kept on all day without clogging the pores, and there is not a drop of oil in it which could reappear and make your face shiny.

At night—the cleansing cream made with oil

Cleanse your skin thoroughly every night if you wish it to retain its clearness and freshness. Only a cream made with oil can really cleanse the skin of the dust and dirt that bore too deep for ordinary washing to reach. At night, after washing your face with the soap

you have found best suited to it, smooth Pond's Cold Cream into the pores. It contains just enough oil to work well into the pores and cleanse them thoroughly. Then wipe the cream gently off. You will be shocked at the amount of dirt this cleansing removes from your skin. When this dirt is allowed to remain in the pores, the skin becomes dull and blemishes and blackheads appear.

Start using these creams today

Both these creams are too delicate in texture to clog the pores and they will not encourage the growth of hair. They come in convenient sizes in both jars and tubes. Get them at any drug or department store. If you desire samples first, take advantage of the offer below. Pond's Extract Company, New York.

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would their life together flow along in that unruffled placidity of old—that quiet, even, steady tide of comradeship, unmarred by the poignancies, the stresses of acute feeling, which make of so many unions an affair so desperate. But, again, who shall say that placidity is the ultimate desirability?

At any rate, this was what eventually came to that singular match which was, so sanely and rationally, so friendly but entirely without emotion, made "with all the cards on the table." And the most

singular thing about the whole affair was this: that it was the one card withheld—the one trivial card which, when finally and inadvertently exposed, threatened for all its triviality to be so tragic—the singular thing is that it was the exposure of this card, and the resultant crashing down of emotion's last barrier and guard, which taught Mart Haven and his wife the supreme truth that the heart sees and hears what reason on her throne may never know—and which lifted them to the heights of life's happiness.

What's The Matter With You American Parents? (Concluded from page 67)

Poor pitiful Madge—and all the other Madges!

If girls are brought up from infancy to hear the lightest views upon fidelity expressed, with divorce ever before them as a possibility of relief if they should draw the wrong mate, how can they be expected to try hard to be good and true? What would seem the use of it? Much simpler to drift on, get as much pleasure as possible out of school companions and college friends, take on matrimony with one of them for a year or so, and then move on to another to get a fresh sex thrill.

Even if divorce has not touched a large percentage of the American nation, the cases of it are so flagrant that there must be many heard of, and even known personally, to every family. And if Jane at home has a respectable father and mother, she hears from Sally at school of her passing on to a new parent, and of all the sorrow it caused.

And the parents are presumably taking it all lying down, lamenting a little probably, but the father continuing his race for dollars, and the mother her life—whatever it may be—a stupid one evidently, or her children would not have broken away from her.

Every example of good bringing up helps, but it should become a national matter—and good citizens should take pride in helping the regeneration of their nation as they took pride in sending their best to fight for the honor of their country in a war which did not personally concern them greatly.

And to the young married people, I would say do not have children at all if you don't feel you are going to be even as responsible for them as savages would. If you are as rotten as that, let the race die out—much better so.

But—why be so stupid?

Look around and see who are happy among your friends, which homes are contented and joyous. And ask yourself why. You will find that both father and mother are respected by the family and that a sense of discipline and order reigns.

Chaos has reduced Russia to imminent starvation and death. Chaos is destruction. Order is construction.

Set your homes and your minds in order before it is too late and don't shuffle off your responsibility on to the spirit of the time—or the badness of the rising generation.

I cried aloud to the young people in my last paper. I now cry aloud to the parents—because America looks to me as though uglyimps were being given power to plaster the Statue of Liberty with mud, which eventually would rot its foundations.

There is nothing wrong in love and passion in the abstract; monogamous love and marriage are splendid, ennobling things. Great love, even when indulged in against the law, has something redeeming in it, though it always pays the price of breaking the law, often with death as in the case of my Lady in "Three Weeks." But the cheap indulgence of every sex emotion under the name of love is dry rot which must enfeeble any nation which lets it run on.

If you let disease, moral or physical, infest the youth of a nation—the result is the same as in garnered fruit.

Remember, parents, that no child will obey you now just because you are a father or mother. You will have to arouse its respect before you are listened to, and you will have to show that the unpleasant consequences of its doing wrong are drawn as the inevitable result of the action, not that you had played providence and administered the punishment which you thought just. Johnnie and Jane don't care a rush for your opinion, in the abstract; they only value it if it convinces their intelligence.

The mothers of the girls of fourteen and fifteen or a little older, might explain to them even now that the way they are starting life is vulgar and common and unlady-like, but then they would have to leave it to the girls' own vanity to improve themselves. It is only in the very young that they will have a chance to engraft refinement as an instinct.

If every possible good training has been given, love, sympathy and example, and yet the girls turn out the disgustingly cheap creatures that one sees in their hundreds now, then the parents can only feel it is their cross, and devote their energies to helping public opinion to alter that which they were unable to cope with personally.

Liberty is a glorious thing, but license is not liberty—it is slavery, the master being an ogre with a scorpion whip!

In the war all sentries who even slept on duty were shot. All deserters were shot—and all cowards hideously punished. But unless a danger to a nation is as obvious as when an enemy is shooting cannon at it, or drenching the air with poison gas, no one seems to feel the obligation to combat it, and so shamefully negligent parents are allowed to go on their slipshod way—unreprimanded even—and the youth of this splendid nation is the sufferer, and will have to pay the price.

So parents, wake up!



These Five Effects Twice Daily

Each use of Pepsodent brings these five desired effects:

- 1—A multiplied salivary flow.
- 2—Multiplied starch digestant in the saliva, to digest starch deposits that cling.
- 3—Multiplied alkalinity of the saliva, to neutralize the acids which cause tooth decay.
- 4—Attacks on film in two efficient ways.
- 5—High polish, so film cannot easily adhere.

See the Change

When you brush teeth in this way

This offers you a ten-day test of a new, scientific teeth-cleaner. Millions now employ it. Leading dentists everywhere advise it. High authorities see in it a new dental era.

We urge you to see what it means to you and yours.

Watch the film

See what it does for film, the great tooth destroyer. Film is that viscous coat you feel. It clings to teeth, gets between the teeth and stays. If not removed, it may do ceaseless damage. Most tooth troubles are now traced to film.

Film absorbs stains, making the teeth look dingy. It is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth to cause decay.

Millions of germs breed in it.

They, with tartar, are the chief cause of pyorrhea.

See it disappear

Old methods of teeth cleaning do not end film. So dental science has for years been seeking an efficient film combatant.

It has been found, and the methods are embodied in a dentifrice called Pepsodent. Many careful tests have proved it, and the use is now fast spreading the world over.

Watch the effects. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coat disappears. It will be a revelation.

The other effects

The saliva is Nature's great tooth-protecting agent. Pepsodent multiplies its flow. It multiplies the

starch digestant in the saliva to digest the starch deposits which may otherwise ferment and form acid.

It multiplies the alkalinity of the saliva, to neutralize the acids which cause tooth decay. Then it polishes teeth so highly that film cannot easily adhere.

All these effects—natural and essential—come with every application. And they mean such tooth protection as the old ways never brought.

See for yourself. Then read in our book the reason for each new effect.

Old ways have proved inadequate. Tooth troubles have been constantly increasing, until very few escape. And film-coated teeth don't shine.

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A scientific film combatant which brings five desired effects. Approved by authorities, and now advised by leading dentists everywhere. Supplied by all druggists in large tubes.

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Mail 10-day tube of Pepsodent to

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ONLY ONE TUBE TO A FAMILY

Men Forget

(Continued from page 57)



Scatter Sunshine with Christmas Cards



This year is going to be a big one for Christmas cards. The stores are ablaze with the most beautiful and artistic lines they have ever carried.

Far or near, rest assured that father, mother, sweetheart, sister, brother, wife or best friend, will truly appreciate the thoughtful spirit that inspires the sending of a Christmas card. It spans space with a fairy bridge, bringing happiness and cheer to those you love.



It is not too early to make your selections. A greeting card costs so little and means so much that you can not afford to take the chance of forgetting any one.

So make up your list as quickly as possible. Let no one look in vain for that evidence of thoughtfulness which bridges the gap of time and distance. Buy early while the stocks are new and fresh.



The Greeting Card Association
Manufacturers only
Buy from your local dealer

"Of course I didn't tell her about you. In fact I lied—I told her that I had really met young Dick and that I was going to see him again tonight. That's why she let me wear this dress that you like. It was being kept brand new for him, but I wanted to give it to you first. Some day I shall tell him—after I have paid back every last thing that I owe to Mrs.—my mother—and I'll try to make up to him for selling him something that is second hand.

"Do you understand how wicked I am?" He kissed her lips, long unknissed because of the recital.

"And you love me anyway, a little?"

"Adore you," he whispered huskily.

"Then I'm glad that I stole all of my firsts for you." She caught her breath, half with pain, as she settled down closer into his arms. "Tonight is yours. Tomorrow—"

She offered her mouth eagerly.

V

LATER he laughed at her tenderly. "You mustn't laugh," she begged. "I might remember it and think you didn't care. The way you are tonight is all that I shall ever have to think about until—"

"Sh! You mustn't waste your tears over something that isn't going to happen. I didn't intend to deceive you, but you don't know who I am and when I explain you'll understand that we shall never have to be apart—ever."

"Dick!"

Perhaps it was because of his lack of social sense, or maybe because his first love was so overpowering an emotion that it discounted shame. At any rate, Dick faced his father unflinchingly, did not even relinquish the dear burden in his arms. She seemed so utterly his that he was quite willing to claim her before all the world.

The captain was there too. But he was not looking at his one-time pupil. Instead he seemed ashamed, troubled.

"You will come into the library at once," Mr. Poole ordered. "Bring the young woman with you."

They did not question his authority—no one ever did—and, not quite comprehending, the two young people followed the older ones up the steps from the beach, across the white terrace and into the library. Dick kept his arm around her, reassuringly, until they were inside.

What a baby she seemed. A scientist dissecting a butterfly was no more out of proportion than the master of millions mercilessly analyzing the character of the child face before him.

Her dress was rumpled a little, but still it was obviously brand new. She was as fresh and dainty as if she had just stepped out of a florist's box. There was a gold thread in the material of her scant gown, an elusive glinting touch which you could not exactly trace. It made you think that perhaps the material would be harsh, but Dick remembered that this was not so.

That cast-back of memory caused him a swift pain. There was so much about her that was delightful to remember. He caught himself marveling at the fact that it should seem so far back in time. And yet as she sat there in that great chair she

seemed as remote as though he were regarding her through the wrong end of an opera glass, and the fact that he had touched her lips not ten minutes before must be only the waking fragment left from the explosion of a dream. Bringing her into the light did not seem to make her closer. On the contrary, it dropped a veil between them.

The financier aroused himself from the study of her features with a sigh.

"Captain MacMurrie, what traps they do lay for us! Dick," he said shortly, "you will go to your room at once. Captain MacMurrie, you will wait outside and when I finish talking with this young lady take her home."

Dick could not say why he obeyed. Perhaps it was the automatic response to words of command which he had learned painstakingly from Captain MacMurrie. At any rate, both of them left the room.

VI

IN the library Jonathan Poole was concluding his remarks to the girl who sat tearless. "So," he said, "I don't blame you. Nature has made you her victim. Your mouth is too apt for kisses. You couldn't be true to any one man. A girl like you is her own conspiracy against herself, with every man for her confederate."

He paused and eyed her shrewdly. "How much?" he asked finally.

"How much?" she repeated.

"Yes." He pulled his check book towards him. "What is the amount of the check I shall write to soothe your wounded feelings, to pay your doubtless luxurious traveling expenses to some distant spot where my son will never see you again?"

It was then that she cried for the first time, not violently but with all her body.

"Why?" he asked in masculine incomprehension.

"I couldn't trade him for money," she explained inadequately. "You see he wasn't Richard Poole to me. I thought of him as just a poor boy and the only reason I gave him me was because I cared."

She stood up with a suddenly assumed womanly dignity, her hand with a handkerchief in it placed over her mouth for a moment to stifle back the sobs. "If you don't mind," she said with regained composure, "I'll go. I don't think I can stand it any more. You see," she finished pitifully with a return to the childlike quaver in her voice, "you have made him such a nice boy."

At the summons of an unheard buzzer Captain MacMurrie entered the library as she turned toward the French window. He took her arm and led her from the room.

VII

WHEN the captain returned to the house once more he went directly to Dick's apartment to see if the lad had retired yet.

The boy was up all right, had not even begun to undress. He seemed to be expecting the captain.

"Well?" he demanded.

"I have just taken the young lady," he paused and added, "home."



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Violet? Rose? Pine?*

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But while some like the rich oriental fullness of Sandalwood, other hostesses are partial to the sweetness of Wistaria or to the flowery delicacy of the Rose or Violet; and still others prefer the balmy fragrance of the Pine.

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Whichever you prefer, you may have it from your druggist or your gift shop. Practically every department store, too, carries it, so swift has been its spread throughout America.

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I enclose 25c for the Introductory Package of Vantine's Temple Incense.

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Dick caught the indecision in his voice and bored the captain with a glance suddenly penetrating and mature.

"Where did you really take her?" he demanded.

The captain looked him straight in the eye and answered truthfully, "She asked to be left on the beach."

"She was crying?"

"I don't know."

Dick started for the door. The captain stepped automatically in front of him, barring the way.

The boy, half undecided, halted. "You haven't the heart, sir," he said, "to keep me from going to her tonight." He scrutinized the captain's face for a sign of weakening and found it. "You shan't."

He brushed by the man whose orders he had never disobeyed before and the latter quite hastily sat down in a chair to think painfully over his dereliction from duty.

After a while he smiled.

VIII

Dick found her face down upon the sands; not crying any more but past that. He lifted her tenderly and brushed her off as a mother might do to a child who has tumbled in the dust. He carried her gently to the pavilion once more.

Then he whispered, close to her lips: "Tonight, you said, is ours. Tomorrow—"

IX

THE next day was marked by preparations for traveling. Dick had not been aware that they were going anywhere, and said as much to his valet, who was busied about his room packing clothing.

"Where?"

"I don't know, sir."

Dick took the matter up with his father. The latter was expecting him and had laid aside his business affairs to attend to this more important one of the family.

"I'm sending you to Europe for a year," he told him briefly. "Captain MacMurrie will accompany you. The tour had been planned for the year after your graduation from college but it can come now as well."

Dick considered the statement. He had never before even questioned a wish of his father's.

"Why?" he asked finally.

"You know why, I believe," Jonathan Poole said evenly. "But I agree with you that it is quite as well to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding by stating the exact terms. The danger is more serious than I had supposed—oh yes, I know that you saw her again last night! I was awake when you came in this morning. You happen to be the only thing on earth that I really care about, and when your happiness is threatened it makes me sleepless, too."

But he brushed aside the self-justification with a gesture of his hand. "Last night I had intended simply to send her away. Now I see that that is not enough. I have no control over her actions, but you are a member of my family and as such, subject to my orders."

Dick looked him square in the eye. It was the first time that anyone had ever really met Jonathan Poole on his own grounds.

"Suppose I refuse to go?" said Dick. "I am going to be married."

Jonathan Poole measured his son calculatingly. He sighed.

"Yes, I believe you would do it. However, I am here to remind you that you are not of age yet and will not be for another year. I am still legally the director of your actions. I shall not force my claim, but instead merely point out that the only way for you to continue to receive your allowance or to participate in any way in the comforts and necessities provided by me is for you to continue to follow the plans I have outlined until you are of age."

"Permit me to argue in conclusion that you have very little to lose by acceding to my wishes. If at the end of one year of absence you still wish to marry this young woman whom you have met so unconventionally I will withdraw my opposition. That is fair enough, isn't it? All I ask is that you do not see her for a year."

Dick somehow felt a chill at the ominousness of that phrase "for a year." It was absurd to think that it would be a heart-wrench not to see daily the person whom he had never seen at all three days before, but he realized that the pain was there, that it was the most real thing in his existence.

Dick wet his lips with the tip of his tongue for the awful plunge he was about to take. "Your proposition is fair," he admitted, "but I warn you I'll come back to claim her. She's mine."

"That's understood," his father accepted the defiance calmly. "You may finish your preparations. Send Captain MacMurrie to me."

When the lad had gone and the captain had reported in his place the father let slip his mask of indifference, allowed his heart to peer forth from his eyes and his mouth to sag unhappily.

"If I weren't so sure that he inherited more of his mother's susceptibility than of my damn fool bulldog tenacity I'd say that he would come back and marry her anyway. But he'll see other pretty faces, other pink and white bodies. I expect you to see to it that he does. That's part of your job. The other part is to intercept any letters that he may write and also any that she may send him."

Captain MacMurrie was six foot two, thin and grizzled. He stood up now and from his elevation said very formally. "Mr. Poole, you will please consider that I have tendered my resignation."

The financier looked at him appraisingly. "Sit down, MacMurrie," he said. "We're both of us old men and you're not going to resign from this household so long as you live. Dick and I love you too much for that. Go with him—I wouldn't let him out of my sight without you—and if it sticks in your crop never mind about the letters. I'll find some other way."

X

DECIDING upon that other way occupied much of Jonathan Poole's time for the next few days following the departure of his son and Captain MacMurrie.

Finally because he guessed shrewdly what was the motive power back of the entire drama, he sought out and found the widowed Mrs. Winters, Rosalyn's adopted

mother, who was staying at a small but select private hotel nearby.

Just as he had suspected, she was a mature woman of no charm but with considerable misapplied ability. She might have made an excellent purchasing agent. Instead, she had chosen to deal in human commodities. She was none the less an efficient haggler.

"You may as well help me," he told her, "because I think you will find there is no particular point in winning the boy if I disinherit him."

"I have reason to suppose that a court of law would recognize that there has been a breach of promise," the woman began primly, her mouth set in a straight line. No woman should look like that.

"I doubt it. But suppose one should. I'll give you more to help me."

Mrs. Winters professed interest. "How much and what for?"

"Fifty-two thousand dollars to be paid in weekly instalments of one thousand."

The woman repressed a gasp. It was more than she had expected. "What are the conditions?" she asked specifically.

"Two. The first is that you intercept and send me all correspondence between the two young people. The other is that you spend all of the money before the year is up. This will give you an opportunity to live well at the most fashionable resorts in the country. If in that time your daughter has not met and married a desirable young man of wealth I will agree to pay you a lump sum of fifty thousand dollars more to be spent entirely as you wish with no restrictions attached. Do you accept?"

The woman, fascinated, nodded slowly.

XI

CAPTAIN MACMURRIE did his best to live up to his part of the contract. Aforetime he knew the old world haunts of beauty, and he found them still populated as of yore.

They made unconventional acquaintances from Brighton to Cairo. English girls, unbelievably fair and much more innocent looking than they really were, would have suffered familiarities which were never taken. French and Latin types laughingly offered their butterfly passion without winning more than perfunctory attention. And there was a lady of title in Alexandria—

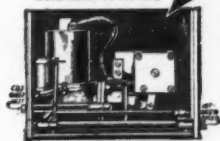
Dick concentrated all his interest in life on the arrival of the mail. For two or three weeks after the landing in England this was a source of happiness. Then it began to be a disappointment. There was nothing. Still he continued to hope and as the hour for the boat to come in, or the train, depending upon where they were, approached, his manner grew more restless, more feverishly inattentive to whatever business or sport was in hand and continued so until the mail was all distributed and he knew that another evil day was upon him. Then he relaxed to a listless complaisance that worried Captain MacMurrie more than an out and out rebellion would have done. Dick tried to do whatever he thought would please the captain, and his gentle courtesy nearly wrung the old man's aching heart.

And then one Monday two or three months before the period of exile would

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have been over Jonathan Poole cabled them to come home—immediately.

There was a boat that afternoon from Brest. They made it from Mentone by airplane.

XII

THE Poole private car met them in New York. There was nothing very remarkable in that. Dick had usually traveled in the family car when his father was not using it. The strange thing about it this time was that Jonathan Poole was there also, apparently with nothing to do but be agreeable. His manner was apologetic, too, which likewise made it a unique occasion in the memories of both Dick and Captain MacMurrie.

They dined together in the car after it was under way and then the financier took Captain MacMurrie into conference. Dick was looking idly through the current magazines, so that the withdrawal of the other two into Mr. Poole's stateroom was not a pointed exclusion.

"Does the damn fool still care for her?" Poole asked.

Captain MacMurrie replied stiffly, "I regret to report, sir, that, to the best of my judgment, he does."

Jonathan Poole sighed. "You're still an unmitigated partisan of young love and spring and all that sort of thing, aren't you, Captain?"

"Dick is the finest boy I ever met," the other explained, "and I have seen him eating his heart out."

"Because he didn't hear from her?"

"Yes."

"And you hate me because you think I stopped her letters?"

"I don't hate anyone. I place Dick's happiness above anything else in life. I have only a few years at best and—"

"I know. I often think the same thing. Well, you're right. I did intercept the mail. Here's the last letter she wrote to him." He handed a much worn envelope to the captain who regarded it doubtfully without extracting its contents. "It's all right to read it. It is my letter now by right of gift from the writer herself and she has given me permission to show it to you."

Not quite able to interpret that statement, the captain drew out the several sheets of note paper and adjusted his glasses.

"Good by, dear:

"That isn't the usual way to begin a letter, I know, but I had to get it over with right away or else I might not be able to say it. With that out of the way I can be quite cheerful. Otherwise I'd be thinking about it all the time and I'd probably smear the ink all up with salty blotches.

"I'm not blaming you in the least little bit. I've been raised on the knowledge that men are apt to forget, so I let myself love you with both eyes open. I was even cheating at the time I first met you, cheating and trying to make something out of the fact that God had given me a nice skin and wavy hair and things like that.

"You probably think that I am saying good by because my feelings are hurt by the fact that you never answer my letters. That isn't the reason. It may not be good by at all. I may write you again

anyway. I shall want to. But if it should happen that I never can again I'd hate not to have said farewell—there I've dropped a damn tear on the paper and I'd kept it so nice before.

"I've written you before that we have had plenty of money. Mrs. Winters seemed devil-posessed to buy me clothes that I haven't needed and to drag me around to hundreds of showy places where I haven't wanted to go. And even before she knew that you didn't write to me—I didn't tell her, she guessed it—she seemed to want me to become interested in some one else. I can't understand it even yet because originally she never talked of anyone in the world but you.

"I didn't understand, myself, why nothing amused me. Once upon a time I was crazy about dancing and parties. You've never danced with me—maybe that's why I don't care about it any more—I only like the things that remind me of you.

"At any rate Mrs. Winters kept getting more and more out of patience with me because I wouldn't let other men play around me the way they wanted to and finally when I told her what I'm about to tell you she hated me.

"We're going to have a son!

"She seemed to think it was something to be ashamed of, that I had been afraid to tell her, when all the time I was keeping it a secret because I was so proud of it and didn't want to share my happiness with anyone.

"She was quite furious, called me rather terrible names and even struck me. I think this must have been bad for me—I only hope it doesn't hurt him. Then she told me to get ready to go with her to some place she had rented up in the mountains where she planned to hide away until it was all over and I could be brought back without any of my men friends knowing anything about it.

"Maybe I am in a peculiarly hysterical condition—I understand that we women sometimes are—but I couldn't help getting the impression that she intended that your boy should never come back with us. The idea tortured me day and night. I woke up shrieking with terror at the pictures of it that I had dreamed.

"So I did the only thing I could think of. I ran away on the day we were to leave. I pawned the few things I had for enough money to buy a ticket to New York where I could hide from her and here I am. The money is gone and I was pretty hungry before I started to write you. Just talking to you makes me feel all right again. But I mustn't get too weak for his sake. I'm going to be just as sensible as it is possible for a woman to be. I'll mail this to you, in care of your father because, of course, I don't know your address, and then I'll walk right up to a policeman on the corner and tell him to arrest me because I'm a bad girl. I know they take care of people who are bad and I don't think the boy will remember it anyway even if he should happen to be born in a jail.

"I think that's all. I don't need to say that awful word I started out the letter with. I send you my dear love. If anything should happen that I can never write again my fluttering wishes will hover over you always, always, always. If some day when you are old you should happen to see in all this world a boy who is a dearer,

cleaner boy than all the others that ever were, who looks almost exactly the way you looked once upon the sands but whose eyes are the wistful mirror of my soul, oh my dear, take him to your heart because his name will be Dick and he will be your boy! You'll have to find him by that description because I won't dare tell your name for fear it might hurt you.

"I hope the policeman isn't too perfect a character. Maybe, if he has ever, in all his life, done something he shouldn't—maybe he'll be kind to us."

There was no signature.

XIII

"You needn't tell me that I'm just the same as a murderer," Jonathan Poole said when the captain had finished and sat in strained silence. "God knows I've been over that often enough in my soul."

"Is she dead?" Captain MacMurrie asked colorlessly.

"No, thank heaven, but the boy is. It was a boy, too, just as she expected. It wasn't hard for me to find her as soon as I got that letter. I haven't done anything else but take care of her since the mail came that day and I got the special train on the way to New York. At first it was because I felt that I owed her some reparation. Afterwards it was because there is something about her that gets you—even when you're old enough to take a personal interest in religion.

"She had the best medical care in the best hospital I knew of, but the child didn't survive. She wouldn't have lived either if I hadn't ridden roughshod over all the precautions and objections of the surgeon and insisted on telling her the whole story right then and there. It distracted her mind, and when I cabled for you to come back she began to get well right away. You can imagine how adorable she is when I tell you that she has forgiven me. Only this morning when I left her on the white terrace to wait until we got home she kissed me good by."

XIV

SHE was waiting for them on the white terrace just as Jonathan Poole had said she would be. She saw them coming—it was moonlight—and she stood up, an absurdly tiny figure against the tremendous pile of the building in back of her, still a pale ghost by contrast with the granite and marble setting.

Dick didn't wait for the others. They were still toiling up the steps when he had reached her side, had mended his heart in her eyes and had begun to kiss away the tears of happiness that she couldn't keep back.

Neither of them noticed when Dick's father and Captain MacMurrie passed them and went into the house.

"The question is," debated Mr. Poole cynically—"will they be happy?"

"On the contrary," countered Captain MacMurrie, "the question is—aren't they?"

A servant met the master of the house. The bishop is waiting to perform the ceremony, sir," he said respectfully.

"Good," acknowledged Jonathan Poole. "Let him wait."

Why You Must Have Beautiful Well-Kept Hair to be Attractive

Illustrated by WILL GREFE



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The R. L. W. Co.

EVERYWHERE you go your hair is noticed most critically.

It tells the world what you are.

If you wear your hair becomingly and always have it beautifully clean and well-kept, it adds more than anything else to your attractiveness.

Beautiful hair is not a matter of luck, it is simply a matter of care.

Study your hair, take a hand mirror and look at the front, the sides, and the back. Try doing it up in various ways. See just how it looks best.

A slight change in the way you dress your hair, or in the way you care for it, makes all the difference in the world in its appearance.

In caring for the hair, shampooing is always the most important thing.

It is the shampooing which brings out the real life and lustre, natural wave and color, and makes your hair soft, fresh and luxuriant.

When your hair is dry, dull and heavy, lifeless, stiff and gummy, and the strands cling together, and it feels harsh and disagreeable to the touch, it is because your hair has not been shampooed properly.

When your hair has been shampooed properly, and is thoroughly clean, it will be glossy, smooth and bright, delightfully fresh-looking, soft and silky.

While your hair must have frequent and regular washing to keep it beautiful, it cannot stand the harsh effect of ordinary soap. The free alkali in ordinary soaps soon dries the scalp, makes the hair brittle and ruins it.

That is why discriminating people use Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo. This clear, pure

and entirely greaseless product cannot possibly injure and it does not dry the scalp, or make the hair brittle, no matter how often you use it.

If you want to see how really beautiful you can make your hair look, just

Follow This Simple Method

FIRST, wet the hair and scalp in clear, warm water. Then apply a little Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo, rubbing it in thoroughly all over the scalp and throughout the entire length, down to the ends of the hair.

Rub the Lather in Thoroughly

TWO or three teaspoonfuls will make an abundance of rich, creamy lather. This should be rubbed in thoroughly and briskly with the finger tips, so as to loosen the dandruff and small particles of dirt and dust that stick to the scalp.

When you have done this, rinse the hair and scalp thoroughly, using clear, fresh, warm water. Then use another application of Mulsified. You can easily tell when the hair is perfectly clean, for it will be soft and silky in the water.

Rinse the Hair Thoroughly

THIS is very important. After the final washing the hair and scalp should be rinsed in at least two changes of good warm water and

followed with a rinsing in cold water. When you have rinsed the hair thoroughly, wring it as dry as you can; and finish by rubbing it with a towel, shaking it and fluffing it until it is dry. Then, give it a good brushing.

After a Mulsified Shampoo you will find the hair will dry quickly and evenly and have the appearance of being much thicker and heavier than it is.

If you want to always be remembered for your beautiful, well-kept hair, make it a rule to set a certain day each week for a Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo.

This regular weekly shampooing will keep the scalp soft, and the hair fine and silky, bright, fresh-looking and fluffy, wavy and easy to manage, and it will be noticed and admired by everyone.

You can get Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo at any drug store or toilet goods counter. A 4-ounce bottle should last for months.

Splendid for children. Fine for men.



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Begin by studying your profile. If you have a pug nose, do not put your hair on the top of your head; if you have a round, fat face, do not fluff your hair out too much at the sides; if your face is very thin and long, then you should fluff your hair out at the sides. The woman with the full face and double chin should wear her hair high. All these and other individual features must be taken into consideration in selecting the proper hairdress. Above all, simplicity should prevail. You are always most attractive when your hair looks most natural when it looks most like you.

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Genuine aquamarine ring, fancy setting in a combination of white and green gold.

A handsome black onyx ring, set with a small diamond. Both stones are genuine.

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Cassidy Pays His Bet

(Continued from page 73)

way, become a part of Nada; her presence raised him out of despair, her voice gave him hope, her unconquerable spirit—fighting for his happiness—inspired him until he saw light where there had been only darkness. The impelling desire to return to her brought him to his feet and down to the pebbly shore of the lake, where the water rippled softly in the thickening gloom. But a still more powerful force held him back, and he went to his blankets, spread over a thick couch of balsam boughs. For hours his eyes were wide open and sleepless.

He no longer thought of Cassidy, but of Yellow Bird. Doubt—a charitable inclination to half believe—gave way in him to a conviction which he could not fight down. More than once in his years of wilderness life strange facts had compelled him to give some credence to the power of the Indian conjuror. Belief in the mastery of the mind was part of his faith in nature. It had come to him from his mother, who had lived and died in the strength of her creed.

"Think hard, and with faith, if you want anything to come true," she had told him. And this was also Yellow Bird's creed. Was it possible she had told him the truth? Had her mind actually communed with the mind of Nada? Had she, through the sheer force of her illimitable faith, projected her subconscious self into the future that she might show him the way? His eyes were staring, his ears unhearing, as he thought of the proof which Yellow Bird had given to him. A few hours ago she had brought him warning of impending danger. There had been no hesitation and no doubt. She had come to him unequivocal and sure. Without seeing, without hearing, she knew Cassidy was stealing upon him through the night.

In the darkness Jolly Roger sat up, his heart beating fast. Without effort, and with no thought of the necessity of proof, Yellow Bird had given him a test of her power. It had been a spontaneous and unstaged thing, a woman's heart reaching out for him—as she had promised that it would. And yet, even as the simplicity and truth of it pressed upon him, doubt followed with its questions. If, after this, Yellow Bird had told him to return to Nada as swiftly as he could, he would have believed, and this night would have seen him on his way. But she had warned him against this, predicting desolation and grief if he returned. She had urged him to go on, somewhere, anywhere, seeking for an illusion and an unreality which the spirits had named to her as the Country Beyond. And when he reached this Country Beyond, wherever it might be, he would possess Nada again, and happiness for all time. After all, there was something archaically crude in what he was trying to believe, when he came to analyze it. Yellow Bird possessed her powers, but they were definitely limited. And to believe beyond those limitations, to ride upon the wings of superstition and imagination, was sheer savagery.

Jolly Roger stretched himself upon his blankets again, repeating this final argument to himself. But as the night drew closer about him, and his eyes closed, and sleep came, there was a lightness in his

heart which he had not known for many days. He dreamed, and his dream was of Nada. He was with her again, the blue of her eyes close to him, her red lips held up to him, her radiant hair filled with the glory of the sun. It seemed, in this dream, that Yellow Bird was always watching them, and they could not quite get away from her. They ran through the jack pine openings where the strawberries and blue violets grew, and he always ran behind Nada, so he could see her brown curls flying about her.

But they never could rid themselves of Yellow Bird, no matter how fast they ran or where they tried to hide. From somewhere Yellow Bird's dark eyes would look out at them, and finally, laughing at his own discomfiture, he drew Nada down beside him in a little fen, white and yellow and blue with wildflowers, and boldly took her head in his arms and kissed her—with Yellow Bird looking at them from behind a banksian clump twenty feet away. So real was the kiss, and so real the warm pressure of Nada's slim arms about his neck, that he awoke with a glad cry—and sat up to find the dawn had come.

For a few moments he sat stupidly, looking about him as if not quite believing the unreality of it all. Then with Peter he went down to the edge of the lake.

All that day Peter sensed a quiet change in his master. Jolly Roger did not talk. He did not whistle or laugh, but moved quietly when he moved at all, with a set, strange look in his face. He was making his last big fight against the desire to return to Cragg's Ridge. Yellow Bird's predictions, and her warning, had no influence with him now. He was thinking of Nada alone. She was back there, waiting for him, praying for his return, ready and happy to become a fugitive with him—to accept her chances of life or death, of happiness or grief, in his company. A dozen times the determination to return for her almost won. But each time came the other picture—a vision of ceaseless flight, of hiding, of hunger and cold and never ending hardship, and at the last, inevitable as the dawning of another day—prison, and possibly the hangman.

Not until late that afternoon did Peter see the old Jolly Roger in the face of his master. And Jolly Roger said:

"We've made up our mind, Pied-Bot. We can't go back. We'll hit north and spend the winter along the edge of the Barren Lands. It's the biggest country I know of, and if Cassidy comes—"

He shrugged his shoulders grimly.

In half an hour they had started, with the sun beginning to sink in the west.

For two days Jolly Roger and Peter paddled their way slowly up the eastern shore of Wollaston. That he had correctly analyzed the mental arguments which would guide Cassidy in his pursuit Jolly Roger had little doubt. He would keep to the west shore, and up through the Hatchet Lake and Black River waterways, as his quarry had never failed to hit straight for the farther north in time of peril. Meanwhile Jolly Roger had decided to make his way without haste up the east shore of Wollaston, and paddle north and

east through the Du Brochet and Thiewiaza River waterways. If these courses were followed, each hour would add to the distance between them, and when the way was safe they would head straight for the Barren Lands.

Peter, and only Peter, sensed the glory of that third afternoon when they paddled slowly ashore close to the shimmering stream of spring water that was called Limping Moose Creek. The sun was still two hours high in the west. There was no wind, and Wollaston was like a mirror; yet in the still air was the clean, cool tang of early autumn, and shoreward the world reached out in ridges and billows of tinted forests, with a September haze pulsing softly over them, fleecy as the misty shower of a lady's powder puff. It was destined to be a memorable afternoon for Peter, a going down of the sun that he would never forget as long as he lived.

Yet there was no warning of the thing impending, and his eyes saw only the mystery and wonder of the big world, and his ears heard only the drowsing murmur of it, and his nose caught only the sweet scents of cedars and balsams and of flowering and ripening things. Straight ahead, beyond the white shore line, was a low ridge, and this ridge—where it was not purple and black with the evergreen—was red with the crimson blotches of mountain ash berries, and patches of fire flowers that glowed like flame in the setting sun.

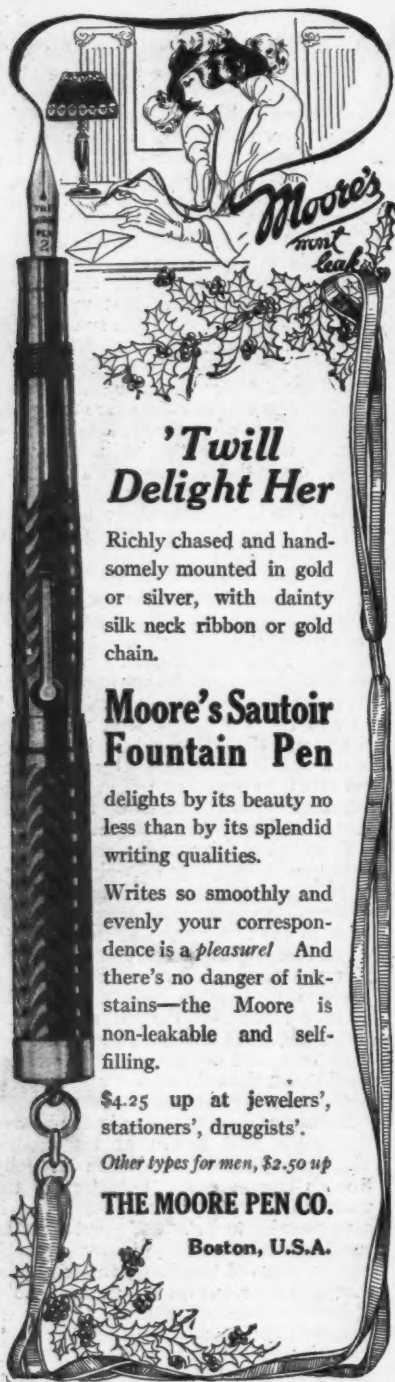
From out of this paradise, as they drew near to it, came softly the voice and song of birds and the chatter of red squirrels. A big jay was screeching over it all, and between the first ridge and the second—which rose still higher beyond it—a cloud of crows were circling excitedly over a mother black bear and her half grown cubs as they feasted on the red ash berries. But Peter could not smell the bears, nor hear them, and the distant crows were of less interest than the wonder and mystery of the shore close at hand.

He turned from his place in the bow of the canoe, and looked at his master. There was little of inspiration in Jolly Roger's face or eyes. The glory of the world ahead gave him no promise, as it gave promise to Peter. Beyond what he could see there lay, for him, a vast emptiness, a chaos of loneliness, an eternity of shattered hopes and broken dreams. Love of life was gone out of him. He saw no beauty. The sun had changed. The sky was different. The bigness of his wilderness no longer thrilled him, but oppressed him.

Peter sensed sharply the change in his master without knowing the reason for it. Just as the world had changed for Jolly Roger, so Jolly Roger had changed for Peter.

They landed on a beach of sand, soft as a velvet carpet. Peter jumped out. A long-legged sandpiper and her mate ran down the shore ahead of him. He perked up his angular ears, and then his nose caught a fresh scent under his feet where a porcupine had left his trail. And he heard more clearly the raucous tumult of the jay and the musical chattering of the red squirrels.

All these things were satisfactory to Peter. They were life, and life thrilled



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Boston, U.S.A.

him, just as it had thrilled his master a few days ago. He ventured a little distance up to the edge of the green willows and the young birch and the crimson masses of fire flowers that fringed the beginning of the forest. It had rained recently here, and the scents were fresh and sweet.

He found a wild currant bush, glistening with its luscious blackberries, and began nibbling at them. A gopher, coming to his supper bush, gave a little squeak of annoyance, and Peter saw the bright eyes of the midget glaring at him from under a big fern leaf. Peter wagged his tail, for the savagery of his existence was qualified by that mellowing sense of humor which had always been a part of his master. He yipped softly, in a companionable sort of way.

And then there smote upon his ears a sound which hardened every muscle in his body.

"Throw up your hands, McKay!"

He turned his head. Close to him stood a man. In an instant he had recognized him. It was the man whose scent he had first discovered down at Cragg's Ridge, the man from whom his master was always running away, the man whose voice he had heard again at Yellow Bird's Camp a few nights ago—Corporal Terence Cassidy, of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police.

Twenty paces away stood Jolly Roger McKay. His dunnage was on his back, his paddle in his hand. And Cassidy, smiling grimly, a dangerous humor in his eyes, was leveling an automatic at his breast. It was, in that instant, a tableau which no man could ever forget. Cassidy was bareheaded, and the sun burned hotly in his red hair. And his face was red, and in the pale blue of his Irish eyes was a fierce joy of achievement. At last, after months and years, the thrilling game of One against One was at an end. Cassidy had made the last move, and he was winner.

For half a minute after the command to throw up his hands Roger McKay did not move. And Cassidy did not repeat the command, for he sensed the shock that had fallen upon his adversary, and was charitable enough to give him time. And then, with something like a deep sigh from between his lips, Jolly Roger's body sagged. The dunnage dropped from his shoulder to the sand. The paddle slipped from his hand. Slowly he raised his arms above his head, and Cassidy laughed softly.

A few days ago McKay would have grinned back, coolly, good-humoredly, appreciative of the other's craftsmanship even in the hour of his defeat. But today there was another soul within him.

His eyes no longer saw the old Cassidy, brave and loyal to his duty, a chivalrous enemy, the man he had yearned to love as brother loves brother, even in the hours of sharpest pursuit. In Cassidy he saw now the hangman himself. The whole world had turned against him, and in this hour of his greatest despair and hopelessness a bitter fate had turned up Cassidy to deal him the finishing blow.

A swift rage burned in him, even as he raised his hands. It swept through his brain in a blinding inundation. He did not think of the law, or of death, or of freedom. It was the unfairness of the thing that filled his soul with the blackness

of one last terrible desire for vengeance. Cassidy's gun, leveled at his breast, meant nothing. A thousand guns leveled at his breast would have meant nothing. A choking sound came from his lips, and like a shot his right hand went to his revolver holster.

In that last second or two Cassidy had foreseen the impending thing, and with the movement of the other's hand he cried out:

"Stop! For God's sake stop—or I shall fire!"

Even into the soul of Peter there came in that moment the electrical thrill of something terrific about to happen. Of impending death, of tragedy close at hand. Once, a long time ago, Peter had felt another moment such as this—when he had buried his fangs in Jed Hawkins's leg to save Nada.

In that fraction of a second which carried Peter through space, Corporal Cassidy's finger was pressing the trigger of his automatic, for Roger McKay's gun was half out of its holster. He was aiming at the other's shoulder, somewhere no. to kill.

The shock of Peter's assault came simultaneously with the explosion of his gun, and McKay heard the hissing spit of the bullet past his ear. His arm darted out. And as Peter buried his teeth deeper into Cassidy's leg, he heard a second shot, and knew that it came from his master. There was no third. Cassidy drooped, and something like a little laugh came from him—only it was not a laugh. His body sagged, and then he crumpled down, so that the weight of him fell upon Peter.

For many seconds after that Jolly Roger stood with his gun in his hand, not a muscle of his body moving, and with something like stupor in his staring eyes. Peter struggled out from under Cassidy, and looked inquisitively from his master to the man who lay sprawled out like a great spider upon the sand. It was then that life seemed to come back into Jolly Roger's body. His gun fell, as if it was the last thing in the world to count for anything now, and with a choking cry he ran to Cassidy and dropped upon his knees beside him.

"Cassidy—Cassidy—" he cried. "Good God, I didn't mean to do it! Cassidy, old pal—"

The agony in his voice stilled the growl in Peter's throat. McKay saw nothing for a space, as he raised Cassidy's head and shoulders, and brushed back the mop of red hair. Everything was a blur before his eyes. He had killed Cassidy. He knew it. He had shot to kill, and not once in a hundred times did he miss his mark. At last he was what the law wanted him to be—a murderer. And his victim was Cassidy—the man who had played him fairly and squarely from beginning to end, the man who had never taken a mean advantage of him, and who had died there in the white sand because he had not shot to kill. With sobbing breath he cried out his grief, and then, looking down, he saw the miracle in Cassidy's face. The Irishman's eyes were wide open, and there was pain, and also a grin, about his mouth.

"I'm glad you're sorry," he said. "I'd hate to have a bad opinion of you, McKay. But—you're a rotten shot!"

His body sagged heavily, and the grin slowly left his lips, and a moan came from between them. He struggled, and spoke:

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"It may be—you'll want help, McKay. If you do—there's a cabin half a mile up the creek. Saw the smoke—heard ax—I don't blame you. You're a good sport—pretty quick—but—rotten shot! Oh, Lord—such—rotten—shot—"

And he tried vainly to grin up into Jolly Roger's face as he became a lifeless weight in the other's arms.

Jolly Roger was sobbing. He was sobbing, in a strange, hard man-fashion, as he tore open Cassidy's shirt and saw the red wound that went clean through Cassidy's right breast just under the shoulder. And Peter still heard that strange sound coming from his lips, a moaning as if for breath, as his master ran and brought up water, and worked over the fallen man. And then he got under Cassidy, and rose up with him on his shoulders, and staggered off with him toward the creek. There he found a path, a narrow foot trail, and not once did he stop with his burden until he came into a little clearing, out of which Cassidy had seen the smoke rising. In this clearing was a cabin, and from the cabin came an old man to meet him—an old man and a girl.

At first something shot up into Peter's throat, for he thought it was Nada who came behind the grizzled and white-headed man. There was the same lithe slimness in her body, the same brown glints in her hair, and the same—but he saw then that it was not Nada. She was older. She was a bit taller. And her face was white when she saw the bleeding burden on Jolly Roger's back.

"I shot him," panted McKay. "God knows I didn't mean to! I'm afraid—"

He did not finish giving voice to the fear that Cassidy was dead—or dying, and for a moment he saw only the big, staring eyes of the girl as the gray-bearded man helped him with his burden. Not until the Irishman was on a cot in the cabin did he discover how childish weak he had become and what a terrific struggle he had made with the weight on his shoulders. He sank into a chair, while the old trapper worked over Cassidy.

He heard the girl call him grandfather. She was no longer frightened, and she moved like a swift bird about the cabin, getting water and bandages and pillows, and the sight of fresh blood and of Cassidy's dead-white face brought a glow of tenderness into her eyes. McKay, sitting dumbly, saw that her hands were doing twice the work his own could have accomplished, and not until he heard a low moan from the wounded man did he come to stand close at her side.

"The bullet went through clean as a whistle," the old man said. "Lucky you don't use soft-nosed bullets, friend."

A deep sigh came from Cassidy's lips. His eyelids fluttered, and then slowly his eyes opened. The girl was bending over him, and Cassidy saw only her face, and the brown sheen of her hair.

"He'll live!" Jolly Roger said tremulously.

The older man remained mute. It was Cassidy, turning his head a little, who answered weakly:

"Don't worry, McKay. I'll—live."

Jolly Roger bent over the cot, between Cassidy and the girl. Gently he took one of the wounded man's hands in both his own.

"I'm sorry, old man," he whispered. "You won, fair and square. And I won't

go far away. I'll be waiting for you when you get on your feet. I promise that. I'll wait."

A wan smile came over Cassidy's lips, and then he moaned again, and his eyes closed. The girl thrust Jolly Roger back.

"No—you better not go far, an' you better wait," she said, and there was an unspoken thing in the dark glow of her eyes that made him think of Nada on that day when she told him how Jed Hawkins had struck her in the cabin at Cragg's Ridge.

That night Jolly Roger made his camp close to the mouth of the Limping Moose. And for three days thereafter his trail led only between this camp and the cabin of old Robert Baron and his granddaughter, Giselle. All this time Cassidy was telling things in a fever. He talked a great deal about Jolly Roger. And the girl, nursing him night and day, with scarcely a wink of sleep between, came to believe they had been great comrades, and had been inseparable for a long time. Even then she would not let McKay take her place at Cassidy's side. The third day she started him off for a post sixty miles away to get a fresh supply of bandages and medicines.

It was evening, three days later, when Jolly Roger and Peter returned. The windows of the cabin were brightly lighted, and McKay came up to one of these windows and looked in. Cassidy was bolstered up in his cot. He was very much alive, and on the floor at his side, sitting on a bear rug, was the girl. She had unbound her shining brown hair so that it fell loose about her, and sitting there, with her back toward him, she seemed more than ever like Nada. A lump rose in Jolly Roger's throat. Quietly he placed the bundle which he had brought from the post close up against the door, and knocked. When Giselle opened it he had disappeared into darkness, with Peter at his heels.

The next morning he found old Robert, and said to him:

"I'm restless, and I'm going to move a little. I'll be back in two weeks. Tell Cassidy that, will you?"

Ten minutes later he was paddling up the shore of Wollaston, and for a week thereafter he haunted the creeks and inlets, always on the move. Peter saw him growing thinner each day. There was less and less of cheer in his voice, seldom a smile on his lips, and never did his laugh ring out as of old. Peter tried to understand, and Jolly Roger talked to him, but not in the old happy way.

"We might have finished him, an' got rid of him for good," he said to Peter one chilly night beside their campfire. "But we couldn't, just like we couldn't have brought Nada up here with us. And we're going back. I'm going to keep that promise. We're going back, Peter, if we hang for it!"

And Jolly Roger's jaw would set grimly as he measured the time between.

The tenth day came, and he set out from the mouth of the Canoe River. On the afternoon of the twelfth he paddled slowly into Limping Moose Creek. Without any reason he looked at his watch when he started for old Robert's cabin. It was four o'clock. He was two days ahead of his promise, and there was a bit of satisfaction in that. There was an odd



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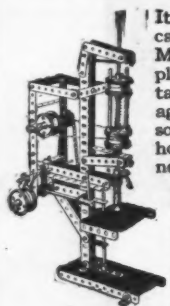


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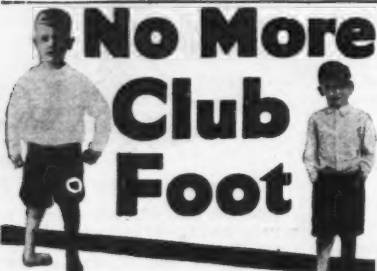
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thumping at his heart. He had faith in Cassidy, a belief that the Irishman would call their affair a draw, and tell him to take another chance in the big open. He was the sort of man to live up to the letter of a wager, when it was honestly made. But, if he didn't—

Jolly Roger paused long enough to take the cartridges from his gun. There would be no more shooting—on his part.

The mellow autumn sun was flooding the open door of the cabin when he came up. He heard laughter. It was Giselle. She was talking, too. And then he heard a man's voice—and from far off to his right came the chopping of an ax. Old Robert was at work. Giselle and Cassidy were at home.

He stepped up to the door, coughing to give notice of his approach. And then, suddenly, he stopped, staring thunder-struck at what was happening within.

Terence Cassidy was sitting in a big chair. The girl was behind him. Her white arms were around his neck, her face was bent down, her red lips were kissing him. And Cassidy's fingers were buried in her shining brown hair, and in Cassidy's laugh Peter heard again the old joyous note that had been in his master's a long time ago in those days when Nada had come to them among the banksian pines and the blue violets and the ripe red strawberries underfoot. And Peter gave a glad yip, even in that moment when Jolly Roger was turning away.

In an instant Cassidy's eyes had caught them.

"Come in," he cried, so suddenly and so loudly that it startled the girl. "McKay, come in!"

Jolly Roger entered, and the girl stood up straight behind Cassidy's chair, her cheeks aflame and her eyes filled with the glow of the sunset. And Terence Cassidy was grinning in that old triumphant way as he leaned forward in his chair, gripping the arms of it with both hands.

"McKay, you've lost," he cried. "I'm the winner!"

In the same moment he took the girl's hand and drew her from behind his chair.

"Giselle, do as you said you were going to do. Prove to him that I've won."

But Corporal Cassidy is not the only member of the Royal Mounties on Jolly Roger's trail. How Roger McKay finds this out and what happens when he does are told in the next story of this enthralling series—in January COSMOPOLITAN.

A Pot of Pansies

(Continued from page 85)

about him. I have persuaded him to go away for a few months—I am taking him to Biarritz. What a calamity his meeting Jacques that afternoon!"

"Ah, but listen!" I urged. "Jacques is terribly cut up that Henri is bitter against him. And, between ourselves, it is a shade unjust. It was not Jacques who affronted Martine, nor even Jacques who first referred to the subject. It was Henri himself."

"Henri made a passing allusion," she protested. "Jacques made an eternal discussion of it. He would never let it drop. Henri is never unjust, he is fairness itself. I have never known anyone who was as fair as Henri always is. Also, he is not bitter against Jacques—we are not so small-minded that we forget old friendships because of an indiscretion. When we

Slowly the girl came to Jolly Roger McKay. Her cheeks were like the red of the sunset. Her eyes were flaming. Her lips were parted. And dumbly he waited, and wondered, until she stood close to him. Then, swiftly, her arms were around his neck, and she kissed him. In an instant she was back on her knees at the wounded man's side, her burning face hidden against him, and Cassidy was laughing, and holding out both hands to Roger McKay.

"McKay, Roger McKay, I want you to meet Mrs. Terence Cassidy, my wife," he said. And the girl raised her face, so that her shining eyes were on Jolly Roger.

Still dumbly he stood where he was. "The Missioner from Du Brochet was here yesterday, and married us," he heard Cassidy saying. "And we've written out my resignation together, old map. We've both won. I thank God you put that bullet into me down on the shore, for it's brought me paradise. And here's my hand on it, McKay—forever and ever!"

Half an hour later, when Jolly Roger McKay stumbled out into the forest trail again, his eyes were blinded by tears and his heart choked by a new hope as big as the world itself. Yellow Bird was right, and God must have been with her that night when her soul went to commune with Nada's. For Yellow Bird had proved herself again. And now he believed her.

He believed in the world again. He believed in love and happiness and the glory of life, and as he went down the narrow trail to his canoe, with Peter close behind him, his heart was crying out Nada's name and Yellow Bird's promise that sometime—somewhere—they two would find happiness together, as Giselle and Terence Cassidy had found it.

And Peter heard the chopping of the distant ax, and the song of birds, and the chattering of squirrels—but thrilling his soul most of all was the voice of his master, the old voice, the glad voice, the voice he had first learned to love at Cragg's Ridge in the days of blue violets and red strawberries, when Nada had filled his world.

come back I shall, of course, go and see Jacques and Blanche as usual. I have nothing against Blanche—it was not her fault that Jacques was so tactless."

Oh, well! Useless to try to convince people of what they don't want to believe. I told Jacques that she and Henri were going away, and predicted that he would find the unpleasantness over when they returned. And, as a matter of fact, I did not attach deep importance to it until a certain morning. The sight of a prospectus led me to inquire of Jacques if the shares he had been counting on were allotted to him. He answered passionately, "No!"

At that I was startled. I asked if he had made an application for them.

"I did not see anything about it soon enough," he raged. "Henri had told me to leave it all to him. And not a word have

I had from him! Even if I had applied, I should not have got them. What malice! Blanche is broken-hearted. I will never forgive him for her grief. It is not as if I had been seeking a gift at his hands—he could have made money for us without its costing him more than a postage stamp. An opportunity to do such a service for a friend comes to a man once in a lifetime! No; his spite against me for nothing is so intense, that deliberately he turns his back on the chance! It is disgusting. We could not believe, we could not think it possible he had been such a swine, after all his promises. So I got his address from the *bonne* and telegraphed to him. You should see his answer—the letter of a stranger: ‘On consideration, he had not cared to take the responsibility of recommending an investment to me.’ Liar! Blanche cried the whole night through. I will never speak another word to him as long as I live. And I do not want to see Elise, either. Blanche’s own cousin, to show such animosity! What a despicable pair!”

“Words will not express my regret,” I said. “And I am amazed at Henri’s attitude. But you cannot be sure that Elise knows anything about it.”

“Why should she not know?” he scoffed.

“I do not suppose that Henri can feel very proud of himself—he may not have confided in her. Besides, Elise said she meant to go on seeing you, the same as ever. That being so, she would hardly encourage him to break his word to you in the meanwhile. I think you are being unfair to Elise.”

“Henri has been more unfair to my poor Blanche,” he bellowed. “I do not hear so much of your sympathy for her.”

It was an infamous reply to make, but he was in the mood to quarrel with anyone that was handy, and I had the magnanimity to let it pass. I was sympathizing sincerely with Blanche, and I sympathized even more when I saw her. She spoke with less vehemence than Jacques, but it was evident he had not exaggerated her dejection.

“It seems incredible,” she said. “It shows that you never really know anyone; nothing could have persuaded me that Henri had it in him to behave so badly. If you had heard him talking to us about the shares—what a benefit they would be to us! And now, to avenge himself for an imaginary wrong—” She gave a gulp. “You don’t think Elise knows? Ah, yes; he and she are one in everything, I assure you! What it would have meant to us, to get dividends! However small the sums might have been, what a godsend to poor Jacques, driving his pen all day! He is working harder than ever, to make up for lost time—he has had to put the thought of the pot of pansies aside for the present—and I could cry as I watch him. By the way, you were going to try to find a plot for that. Did you?”

“Nothing occurred to me,” I said.

I could say nothing to cheer her, either then, or later, though I often looked in at the flat and did my best. And to inflame the indignation, the shares rose. They rose and went on rising. And Jacques, who had hitherto never so much as glanced at closing prices, developed a morbid interest in following their advance. I shall not forget the day, about three months after the issue, when I learned that they were

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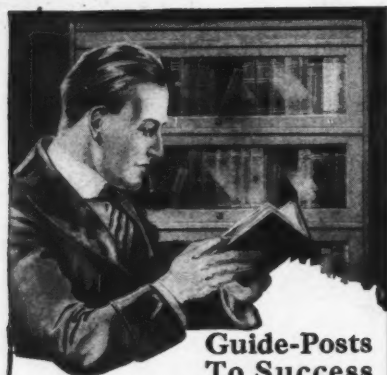


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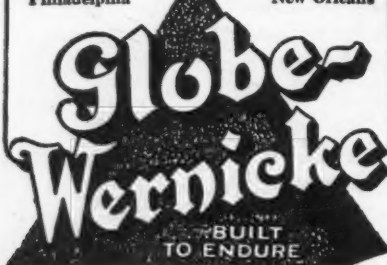
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quoted at forty francs, and that, if Henri had kept his word, my host and hostess would have doubled their capital. I shall not forget it for two reasons. First, the lamentations they gave way to were exceedingly trying to me; second, on that very afternoon Elise walked in.

I had not known that she was back, else I should have prepared her for the situation. Blanche, ignoring the proffered embrace, tendered the tips of her fingers, and Jacques bowed, as to a woman he had never seen before. Elise turned very pale. Her scared eyes sought mine, and I tried by the warmth of my greeting to mitigate the moment for her.

"What is the matter?" she faltered of us all.

"It is only surprise at your visit," said Blanche sarcastically.

Impossible to avert it. The storm broke. Just as I surmised, Elise had been unaware of Henri's misdeed. But though her consternation was only too apparent, Jacques and Blanche were in no mood to let it influence them. The tirade against Henri to which Jacques condemned her was bad to bear. She quivered under it. She could do nothing but stammer painfully, "I forbid you to insult my husband, I forbid you to insult my husband!" Blanche knew how to stab, too, in her pathetic voice.

"Ah, it is useless to talk, Elise!" she sobbed. "As a rich woman, you do not understand what three thousand francs would have done for us! Three thousand francs! We have been scraping for eight years to put by as much as that, and if Henri had been fair to us we should have doubled our means already. Three thousand francs! To Jacques, who in all his life has never had a sou that wasn't wrung out of his poor tired head! It is the wickedness towards him that I resent—towards him, and our child. And what is the cause? That Henri is unmanly enough to hate another for his own mistake. Ah, it is too petty and contemptible of him for words!"

"But remember it is not Elise's fault," I begged. I saw that she could endure no more. "Say these things to Henri, both of you, if you must—not to her!"

"Blanche is in no need of your corrections," shouted Jacques hysterically. "Attend to your own affairs. My wife talks to her cousin as she thinks fit. It is always Elise your champion. If you feel so deeply for our enemies, I wonder that you come here."

I could scarcely credit my ears. But I said very quietly with dignity: "Indeed? I shall not put you to the trouble of wondering twice."

And, as Blanche remained silent—for which she was very culpable, for I looked towards her as I moved—I offered my arm to Elise, who was so much deranged that she could hardly get down the interminable staircase, and took her home in a cab.

As will be readily understood, I had no ambition to assist at her next conversation with Henri, and I did not intend to enter the house. Unluckily, when the cab stopped, he was on the veranda, and he came to the gate.

"Comment? What is it?" he demanded, seeing her agitation.

"She is rather upset," I said. "I won't come in."

"Yes, yes, come in! Tell him what has

happened," gasped Elise peremptorily. Whereby she, in her turn, committed a grave fault, for she made me witness matrimonial dissension of which I need, otherwise, have had no knowledge.

"She has been to see Jacques and Blanche," I said, following them into the salon.

"Ah?" said Henri, with reserve.

"Yes, I have been to see Jacques and Blanche," she panted, "and a nice time I have had there!"

He decided on *hauteur*. "I am quite at a loss. If one of you will explain!"

As she looked at me, I said: "They told her you did not do as they expected about the shares. I rather gathered that there was some tendency towards feeling hurt."

"Hurt? On reflection, I saw that I had not the right to advise Jacques to speculate. What of it?"

"They do not view it as a speculation," I said.

"They! Much they know of business!" "Did you take shares yourself?" queried Elise.

"The cases are not parallel," he contended, his voice rising excitedly. "Jacques is a poor man; I did not feel justified in letting him risk money."

"Oh, Henri," she wailed, "you know very well that was not the reason! It was not loyal of you, it was very, very wrong. Already it would have been a little fortune for them. No wonder they are aggrieved. I cannot be surprised—much as I have suffered this afternoon, I cannot be surprised at what I have had to hear."

"What you have had to hear? You have heard that I did not choose to assume the responsibility of conducting another man's affairs. And then? Ah, *je m'en fiche*! I am fed up with Jacques."

"I have had to hear you broke a promise because you were mean-spirited enough to blame him for your own *gaffe* to Martime," she cried. "Of my husband I have had to hear that! No, I cannot be surprised at what they said. They said it was petty and contemptible of you—and so it was!"

For an instant it was as if she had hurled a thunderbolt. Henri stood inarticulate, his eyes bulging from his head. Then, bringing his fist on to the table with a blow that made every ornament in the room jump, he roared:

"You dare to say it? To me, your husband, you dare to say such a thing? You shall ask pardon at once, in the presence of the friend who has heard the insult!" And, as it was obvious she would do nothing of the kind, he went on without loss of time: "No! I forbid you to apologize—it is vain. There are insults that apologies cannot obliterate. A husband who is 'contemptible' to his wife is best apart from her—I can find comprehension elsewhere."

I was having a pleasant day—what with one *ménage* and the other, I was having a pleasant day. There ensued a quarrel the more harrowing from the fact that the recriminations poured from a pair whom I knew to be, at heart, lovers. And as often as I endeavored to steal out, either Henri or Elise would pounce upon me, to confirm some point that did not matter. When I got away at last my need of stimulant was insupportable.

I had, naturally, expected to receive a penitent missive from Jacques that night, and when there was a knocking at my door

I did not doubt that he had come to beg forgiveness in person. But it was Henri who flung in, and dropped into a chair.

"Enfin, I go back no more," he groaned.

He took my breath away.

"You are mad," I stuttered. "What? You part from a wife you adore, and who adores you, because of a hasty word? Are you a boy, to behave so wildly?"

"There are words, and words!" His face twitched, and crumpled. "It is because I am not a boy that I see clearly we could never again be happy together. The madness would be to try! To sit, every day, opposite a woman who is thinking me contemptible? *Merci*. I could not endure it. Every meal, every moment would become a hell."

"Ah, if she were thinking it, really! But she spoke impetuously—she had had much to try her. She had only just left Jacques and——"

"Ah, *mon Dieu, mon Dieu*, what I owe to that man!" he vociferated. "What everlasting afflictions, his telling me of his accursed pansies! First, it annihilated my prospects, and now it rends me from my wife and children. I shall stipulate that they live with me for half the year; but what of the other half, while they are being taught that the father who loves them so dearly is a contemptible man, disgusting to their mother?" He rocked to and fro. "Also, how am I to make a home for them when they come? I leave the villa to Elise; I cannot afford two establishments—above all, now that I have lost the production by Martine and may never see a *sou* from work that has occupied me for a year. Malediction on that pot of pansies!"

"Now listen." He had been to the last degree unreasonable, but he was suffering, and I have a good heart. "I guarantee that this separation will not last a week. I shall have a talk with Elise."

"With Elise? It is I who make the separation!" he objected, with a piteous attempt at dignity. "And further—I have no hostility against you—but it is partly through your own talks with Elise that she is lost to me. Ah, yes!" I had stared at him, stupefied. "I understand that you said to her, at the time, that I was guilty of 'injustice' towards Jacques. I do not sty you traduced me with any vicious motive, but, unquestionably, your irresponsible chatter paved the way to the catastrophe that wrecks my life."

My turpitude notwithstanding, he wept in my room till three that morning, keeping me up. And he, and Elise, too, proved very distressing to me during the days that followed. She was equally headstrong. I was surprised at her.

"You mean well, but pray say no more. It is inevitable," she answered me tremulously. "As for that stupid affair of Jacques and Blanche, I dare say I may have misjudged Henri. They don't understand. As a business man, no doubt he did what was really best in their own interests." I perceived that her commiseration for them had much abated since it involved her in domestic strife. "But his conduct towards me—I have done with him. I am not a fool, to imagine an honorable man would desert his wife for a reason like that. A performance. He did not even forget his razor stop. Let him go to her! He was not an angel, no writing man is, but I thought he loved me, and I never complained. Because I admired him,

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because he was the one man in the world to me. Behind the curtain it hung, not even in sight, and he did not forget it when he packed! Hypocrite! You heard him say he could 'find comprehension elsewhere'. She will not keep his linen in such order as I have done, that I'll swear. To pretend it was just because I believed what Jacques and Blanche had said! I believe nothing that they say. I detest them. Oh, they have made a pretty mess of my life, those two!"

She was illogical, but I was much displeased with Jacques and Blanche, myself. The previous day I had seen them in the street. It is true that they cast ingratiating glances, but in the circumstances they should have done a good deal more. And I, very properly, looked away.

Yes, for fully three weeks the estrangement of Henri and Elise made demands on my time. And since each of them viewed the other as the aggressor, their criticisms of each other were not unduly diffident. Nevertheless I continued to do all in my power for them. I implored Henri to return, and I besought Blanche to write to him, though it was no recreation to me to keep pressing counsel upon people who told me they did not want to hear it. When there were two consecutive days without Henri despairing in my chair, the lull was welcome.

I cannot depict my joyful surprise, the next evening, on seeing them issue radiantly from the Restaurant Noël Peters, arm in arm. I had had no news of the reconciliation. I rushed to them and clasped their hands.

"Hurrah!" I exclaimed. "*A la bonheur!* How delighted I am the trouble is over!"

Their greeting appeared to me a shade constrained.

"Oh, that didn't amount to much!" Henri mumbled, brushing my reference aside.

"No one supposed it did," laughed Elise

lightly. And as I found myself at a loss what to say next, there was a pause.

"We are going to a theater," said Henri; "we are rather late." After a glance at his wife, he added, in flat tones, "You will dine with us one night, *hein?*"

"Ah yes!" said Elise perfunctorily. "Of course."

When I went, we did not allude to what had happened. Nor was the conversation on general topics as animated as when I had dined there hitherto. For the first time at their table, I was depressed.

And it was the last invitation from them I received. Probably I was embarrassing to them, by reason of their having railed against each other to me while they thought they would never make it up. Also, though Henri could forgive his admiring wife for once calling him petty and contemptible, one may be sure it was bitter to him to remember I had been present when she humiliated him. That both he and Elise resented my sharing the secret of their separation was as clear as daylight. For some months afterwards, if I chanced to meet them, they would stop and exchange a few words with me, but by and by they contented themselves with smiling, and finally they preferred to pass without perceiving that I was there. When that play of Henri's was produced, two or three years later, he had become so alien to me that I should never have dreamed of going to see it, if I had not got in for nothing. The leading man was not capable of the part, and the run was short—by which Henri's enmity against Jacques was doubtless intensified.

The two couples that used to be so intimate, remain at daggers drawn. And both couples are strangers to me. I do not think there is anything to add, excepting that the story of the pot of pansies has not been accomplished, to this day. The tragic history that I have related is the story of the story that was never found.

Jeeves in the Springtime

(Continued from page 15)

as it does of driving an idea home by constant repetition. You may have had experience of the system?"

"You mean they keep on telling you that some soap or other is the best, and after a bit you come under the influence and charge round the corner and buy a cake?"

"Exactly, sir. The same method was the basis of all the most valuable propaganda during the recent war. I see no reason why it should not be adopted to bring about the desired result with regard to the subject's views on class distinctions. If young Mr. Little were to read day after day to his uncle a series of narratives in which marriage with young persons of an inferior social status was held up as both feasible and admirable, I fancy it would prepare the elder Mr. Little's mind for the reception of the information that his nephew wishes to marry a waitress in a tea shop."

"Are there any books of that sort nowadays? The only ones I ever see mentioned in the papers are about married couples who find life gray and can't stick each other at any price."

"Yes, sir, there are a great many, neg-

lected by the reviewers but widely read. You have never encountered *All for Love*, by Rosie M. Banks?"

"No."

"Nor *A Red, Red Summer Rose* by the same author?"

"No."

"I have an aunt, sir, who owns an almost complete set of Rosie M. Banks. I could easily borrow as many volumes as young Mr. Little might require. They make very light, attractive reading."

"Well, it's worth trying."

"I should certainly recommend the scheme, sir."

"All right, then. Toddle round to your aunt's tomorrow and grab a couple of the fruitiest. We can but have a dash at it."

"Precisely, sir."

Bingo reported three days later that Rosie M. Banks was the goods and beyond a question the stuff to give the troops. Old Little had jibbed somewhat at first at the proposed change of literary diet, he not being much of a lad for fiction and having stuck hitherto exclusively to the 'heavier monthly reviews: but Bingo had got chapter one of *All for Love* past his

guard before he knew what was happening, and after that there was nothing to it. Since then they had finished *A Red, Red Summer Rose*, *Madcap Myrtle*, and *Only a Factory Girl*, and were half-way through *The Courtship of Lord Strathmore*.

Bingo told me all this in a husky voice over an egg beaten up in sherry. The only blot on the thing from his point of view was that it wasn't doing a bit of good to the old vocal cords, which were beginning to show signs of cracking under the strain. He had been looking his symptoms up in a medical dictionary and he thought he had got clergyman's throat. But against this you had to set the fact that he was making an undoubted hit in the right quarter, and also that after the evening's reading he always stayed on to dinner; and, from what he told me, the dinners turned out by old Little's cook had to be tasted to be believed. There were tears in the blighter's eyes as he got on the subject of the clear soup. I suppose to a fellow who for weeks had been tackling macaroons and limado it must have been like Heaven.

Old Little wasn't able to give any practical assistance at these banquets, but Bingo said that he came to the table and had his whack of arrowroot and sniffed the dishes and told stories of entrées he had had in the past and sketched out scenarios of what he was going to do to the bill of fare in the future, when the doctor put him in shape, so I suppose he enjoyed himself too in a way. Anyhow, things seemed to be buzzing along quite satisfactorily, and Bingo said he had got an idea which, he thought, was going to clinch the thing. He wouldn't tell me what it was, but he said it was a pippin.

"We make progress, Jeeves," I said.

"That is very satisfactory, sir."

"Mr. Little tells me that when he came to the big scene in *Only a Factory Girl*, his uncle gulped like a stricken bull pup."

"Indeed, sir?"

"Where Lord Claude takes the girl in his arms, you know, and says . . ."

"I am familiar with the passage, sir. It is distinctly moving. It was a great favorite of my aunt's."

"I think we're on the right track."

"It would seem so, sir."

"In fact, this looks like being another of your successes. I've always said and I always shall say that for sheer brain, Jeeves, you stand alone. All the other great thinkers of the age are simply in the crowd, watching you go by."

"Thank you very much, sir. I endeavor to give satisfaction."

About a week after this, Bingo blew in with the news that his uncle's gout had ceased to trouble him and that on the morrow he would be back at the old stand working away with knife and fork as before.

"And, by the way," said Bingo, "he wants you to lunch with him tomorrow."

"Me? Why me? He doesn't know I exist."

"Oh yes, he does! I've told him about you."

"What have you told him?"

"Oh, various things! Anyhow, he wants to meet you. And take my tip, laddie—you go! I should think lunch tomorrow would be something special."

I don't know why it was, but even then it struck me that there was something dashed odd—almost sinister, if you know what I mean—about young Bingo's



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manner. The old egg had the air of one who has something up his sleeve.

"There is more in this than meets the eye," I said. "Why should your uncle ask a fellow to lunch whom he's never seen?"

"My dear old fathead, haven't I just said that I've been telling him all about you—that you're my best pal—at school together, and all that sort of thing?"

"But even then . . . And another thing. Why are you so dashed keen on my going?"

Bingo hesitated for a moment.

"Well, I told you I'd got an idea. This is it. I want you to spring the news on him. I haven't the nerve myself."

"What! I'm hanged if I do."

"And you call yourself a pal of mine!"

"Yes, I know, but there are limits . . ."

"Bertie," said Bingo reproachfully, "I saved your life once."

"When?"

"Didn't I? It must have been some other fellow, then. Well, anyway, we were boys together and all that. You can't let me down."

"Oh, all right!" I said. "But, when you say you haven't nerve enough for any dashed thing in the world, you misjudge yourself. A fellow who . . ."

"Cheerio!" said young Bingo. "One-thirty tomorrow. Don't be late."

I'm bound to say that the more I contemplated the binge, the less I liked it. Being a weak-minded sort of blighter, I'm pretty used to being landed with rotten jobs by my pals. They slide up to me with beaming faces and suggest my doing all sorts of foul things for their benefit, and I simply haven't the heart to give them the firm raspberry. But this consignment of young Bingo's struck me as the unsurpassable limit. Here was I, going to butt into the private affairs of a perfect stranger, and what would the harvest be? It was all very well for Bingo to say that I was slated for a magnificent lunch; but what good is the best possible lunch to a fellow if he is slung out into the street on his ear during the soup course? However, the word of a Wooster is his bond and all that sort of rot, so at one-thirty next day I tottered up the steps of No. 16 Pounceby Gardens and punched the bell. And half a minute later I was up in the drawing room, shaking hands with the fattest man I have ever seen in my life.

The motto of the Little family was evidently "variety." Young Bingo is long and thin and hasn't had a superfluous ounce on him since we first met, but the uncle restored the average and a bit over. The hand which grasped mine wrapped it round and enfolded it till I began to wonder if I'd ever get it out without excavating machinery.

For when I say grasped, I mean grasped. It wasn't one of the ordinary hullo-how-are-you handshakes. He grabbed the old fin and hung on as if he wanted to keep it as a souvenir, gazing at me the while as though I was what he had been looking for all these weary years.

"Mr. Wooster, I am gratified . . . I am proud . . . I am honored."

It seemed to me that young Bingo must have boosted me to some purpose.

"Oh, ah!" I said.

He stepped back a bit, still hanging on to the good right hand.

"You are very young to have accomplished so much!"

I couldn't follow the train of thought. The family, especially my Aunt Agatha who has savaged me incessantly from childhood up, have always rather made a point of the fact that mine is a wasted life and that, since I won the prize at my first school for the best collection of wildflowers made during the summer holidays, I haven't done a damn thing to land me on the nation's scroll of fame. I was wondering if he couldn't have got me mixed up with some one else, when the telephone bell rang outside in the hall, and the maid came in to say that I was wanted. I buzzed down, and found it was young Bingo.

"Hullo!" said young Bingo. "So you've got there? Good man! I knew I could rely on you. I say, old crumpet, did my uncle seem pleased to see you?"

"Absolutely all over me. I can't make it out."

"Oh, that's all right! I just rang up to explain. The fact is, old man, I know you won't mind, but I told him that you were the author of those books I've been reading to him."

"What!"

"Yes, I said that Rosie M. Banks was your pen name, and you didn't want it generally known, because you were a modest, retiring sort of chap. He'll listen to you now. Absolutely hang on your words. A brightish idea, what? I don't want to pelt myself with floral tributes, but I must say I doubt if Jeeves in person could have thought up a better one than that. Well, pitch it strong, old lad, and keep steadily before you the fact that I must have my allowance raised. I can't possibly marry on what I've got now. If this film is to end with the slow fade-out on the embrace, at least double is indicated. Well, that's that. Pip pip, old cake. Let me know how you get on. I shall watch your future progress with considerable interest. Cheerio!"

And he rang off, just as I was getting ready rather to spread myself. And at that moment the gong sounded, and the genial host came tumbling downstairs like the delivery of a ton of coals. You can never judge a man's athletic capabilities by his build. Old Little may have looked a bit on the stoutish side, but he was like lightning off the mark when the gong went.

I always look back to that lunch with a sort of aching regret. I feel it was one of those Lost Opportunities the thought of which haunts chappies all through their life and makes them kick themselves in old age. Because it was the lunch of a lifetime, and I wasn't in a fit state to appreciate it. Subconsciously, if you know what I mean, I could see it was pretty special, and every now and then old Little would break off his remarks to croon lovingly over some dish. But I had got the wind up to such a frightful extent over the ghastly situation in which young Bingo had landed me that its deeper meaning never really penetrated. Most of the time I might have been eating sawdust for all the good it did me.

Old Little struck the literary note right from the start.

"My nephew has probably told you that I have been making a close study of your books of late?" he began.

"Yes. He did mention it. How—er—how did you like the bally things?" He gazed reverently at me.

"Mr. Wooster, I am not ashamed to say that the tears came into my eyes as I listened to them. It amazes me that a man as young as you can have been able to plumb nature so surely to its depths; to play with so unerring a hand on the quivering heartstrings of your reader; to write novels so true, so human, so moving, so vital!"

"Oh, it's just a knack!" I said.

The good old perspiration was bedewing my forehead by this time in a pretty lavish manner. I don't know when I've been so rattled.

"Do you find the room a trifle warm?" he asked.

"Oh no, no, rather not! Just right."

"Then it's the pepper. If my cook has a fault—which I am not prepared to admit—it is that she is inclined to stress the pepper a trifle in her made dishes. By the way, do you like her cooking?"

I was so relieved that we had got off the subject of my literary output that I shouted approval in a ringing barytone. The old boy seemed deeply touched.

"I am delighted to hear it, Mr. Wooster. I may be prejudiced, but to my mind that woman is a genius."

"Absolutely!" I said.

"She has been with me seven years, and in all that time I have not known her guilty of a single lapse from the highest standard. Except once, in the winter of 1917, when a purist might have condemned a certain mayonnaise of hers as lacking in creaminess. But one must make allowances. There had been several air raids about that time, and no doubt the poor woman was shaken. But nothing is perfect in this world, Mr. Wooster, and I have had my cross to bear. For seven years I have lived in constant apprehension lest some evilly disposed person might lure her from my employment. To my certain knowledge she has received offers, lucrative offers, to accept service elsewhere. You may judge of my dismay, Mr. Wooster, when only this morning the bolt fell. She gave notice!"

"Good Lord!"

"Your consternation—excited as it is by the misfortunes of one who until recently was a total stranger—does credit, if I may say so, to the heart of the author of *A Red, Red Summer Rose*. But I am thankful to say the worst has not happened. The matter has been adjusted. Jane is not leaving me."

"Good egg!"

"Good egg, indeed—though the expression is not familiar to me. I do not remember having come across it in your books. And, speaking of your books, may I say that what has impressed me about them even more than the moving poignancy of the actual narrative is your philosophy of life. If there were more men like you, Mr. Wooster, London would be a better place."

This was dead opposite to my Aunt Agatha's philosophy of life, she having always rather given me to understand that it is the presence in it of chappies like me that makes London more or less of a plague-spot; but I let it go.

"Let me tell you, Mr. Wooster, that I appreciate your splendid defiance of the outworn fetishes of a purblind social system. I appreciate it! You are big enough to see that rank is but the guinea

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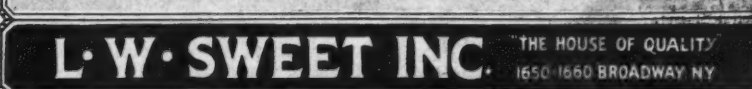
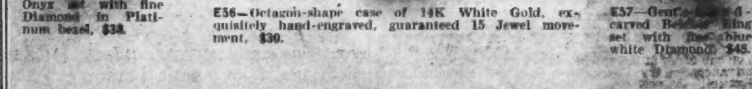
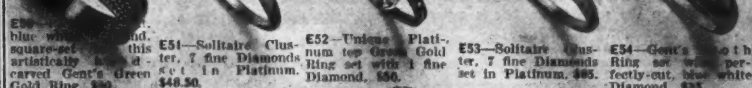
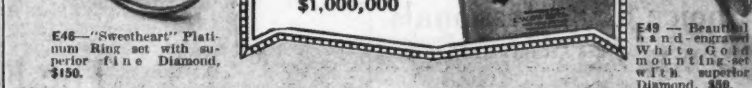
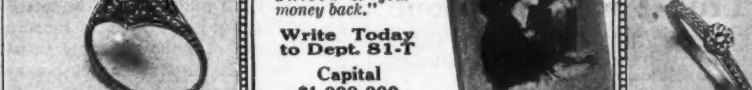
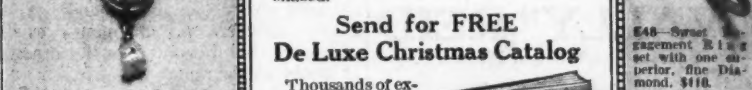
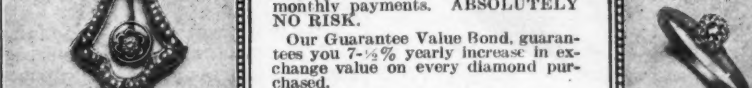
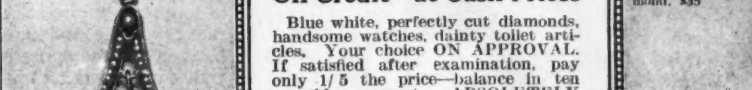
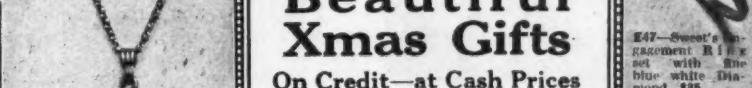
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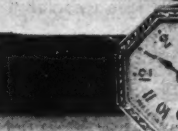
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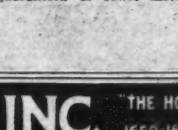
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stamp and that, in the magnificent words of Lord Bletchmore in *Only A Factory Girl*, 'Be her origin ne'er so humble, a good woman is the equal of the finest lady on earth!'

I sat up.

"I say! Do you think that?"

"I do, Mr. Wooster. I am ashamed to say that there was a time when I was like other men, a slave to the idiotic convention which we call class distinction. But, since I read your books . . ."

I might have known it. Jeeves had done it again.

"You think it's all right for a chappie in what you might call a certain social position to marry a girl of what you might describe as the lower classes?"

"Most assuredly I do, Mr. Wooster."

I took a deep breath, and slipped him the good news.

"Young Bingo—your nephew, you know—wants to marry a waitress," I said.

"I honor him for it," said old Little.

"You don't object?"

"On the contrary."

I took another deep breath and shifted to the sordid side of the business.

"I hope you won't think I'm butting in, don't you know," I said, "but—er—well, how about it?"

"I fear I do not quite follow you."

"Well, I mean to say, his allowance and all that. The money you're good enough to give him. He was rather hoping that you might see your way to jerking up the total a bit."

Old Little shook his head regretfully.

"I fear that can hardly be managed. You see, a man in my position is compelled to save every possible penny. I will gladly continue my nephew's existing allowance, but beyond that I cannot go. It would not be fair to my wife."

"What! But you're not married?"

"Not yet. But I propose to enter upon that holy state almost immediately. The lady who for so many years has cooked so well and faithfully for me, honored me by accepting my hand this very morning." A cold gleam of triumph came into his eye. "Now let 'em try to get her away from me!" he muttered defiantly.

Cosmopolitan for December, 1921

"Young Mr. Little has been trying frequently during the afternoon to reach you on the telephone, sir," said Jeeves that night, when I got home.

"I'll bet he has," I said. I had sent poor old Bingo an outline of the situation by messenger boy shortly after lunch.

"He seemed a trifle agitated."

"I don't wonder. Jeeves," I said. "Brace up and bite the bullet. I'm afraid I've bad news for you."

"Sir?"

"That scheme of yours—reading those books to old Mr. Little and all that—has blown out a fuse."

"They did not soften him?"

"They did. That's the whole bally trouble. Jeeves, I'm sorry to say that fiancée of yours—Miss Watson, you know—the cook, you know—well, the long and the short of it is that she's chosen riches instead of honest worth, if you know what I mean."

"Sir?"

"She's handed you the mitten and gone and got engaged to old Mr. Little!"

"Indeed, sir?"

"You don't seem much upset."

"The fact is, sir, I had anticipated some such outcome."

I stared at him. "Then what on earth did you suggest the scheme for?"

"To tell you the truth, sir, I was not wholly averse from a severance of my relations with Miss Watson. In fact, I greatly desired it. I respect Miss Watson exceedingly, but I have seen for a long time that we were not suited. Now, the other young person with whom I have an understanding . . ."

"Great Scott, Jeeves! There isn't another?"

"Yes, sir."

"How long has this been going on?"

"For some weeks, sir. I was greatly attracted by her when I first met her at a subscription dance at Camberwell . . ."

"My sainted aunt! Not . . .?"

Jeeves inclined his head gravely.

"Yes, sir. By an odd coincidence it is the same young person that young Mr. Little . . . I have placed the cigarettes on the small table . . . Good night, sir."

The First Night

(Continued from page 85)

"Is there a telephone there?" asked Cavan.

"A-course there is," said Burke.

"Let's go," said Cavan.

They crossed the street and entered the Carthew Chambers. The telephone operator recognized the young man who had been there just a few minutes before.

"Mr. Garrison ain't come back," she said. She looked curiously at the Inspector.

Burke stared at his somewhat unwilling companion. "Who's Garrison?" he demanded.

Cavan shrugged a shoulder toward the listening operator. Burke chuckled.

"This young lady knows who I am, Cavan. She's a bright young lady, for a fact.

Told me a lot about Blanding that I'll bet he never told his mother."

"But you promised, Mr. Burke, that you wouldn't let the superintendent know I talked," said the girl.

"S all right, girlie," said the police

officer. "Any time your superintendent wants to fire you because you help the police, you let me know, and he'll be lookin' for a job. Where is he now? Get him."

His last words were peremptory and the girl immediately plugged in a switch. Cavan touched Burke on the arm.

"There's a booth here, Inspector. Mind my telephoning now?"

"Go to it," said Burke.

Cavan entered the booth. It was a pay station, for the convenience of passers-by who might wish to telephone when the operator was absent. So Cavan was enabled to get connected with Mannheim, at the Regent Theater, without the girl's hearing him.

Mannheim greeted his voice excitedly.

"What you found out, Stevie?" he cried.

"Oh, quite a lot, Bennie!" said the reporter. "But never mind that now. Tell me—did Blanding ever take the 'props' home with him?"

"Certainly not," replied the manager. "Why would he?"

"But at the start of a new show?" Cavasan persisted. "Mightn't he buy something for the show and take it home with him before he took it to the theater?"

"What are you driving at?" Mannheim asked. "Sure, he might. There ain't no law against carrying packages through the streets, is there?"

The reporter laughed, even in his excitement.

"Manny," he went on, "do you think Blanding might have had that gun home with him at any time?"

"Oh, now I get you!" Mannheim exclaimed. "Well, sure—just before the dress rehearsal, he might have. Say, Stevie—"

But the reporter hung up and left the booth. He knew now the answer to the vital question—who had substituted the deadly gun for the harmless property weapon. Of course, if his theories had been correct at all, Garrison must have been the man, but subconsciously he had been worrying as to how and when Garrison had effected the substitution. But if Blanding and Garrison lived in the same apartment building . . .

The superintendent arrived as he left the booth. Shocked and alarmed at the tragedy in which his building was, even though remotely and accidentally, involved, he was none too gracious. But healthy respect for Inspector Burke's position made him civil.

He consented at once to go upstairs to Blanding's apartment. It was a commonplace enough suite; Cavasan learned later that Blanding had rented it furnished from people who were spending a year abroad. In the living room the three men sat down.

"A guy named Telcher," said Burke to the superintendent. "Ever hear of him?"

But it was not mere unwillingness to add, by his testimony, anything to the scandal in which the building figured so unsavorily, that made the superintendent's answer negative. That was obvious. He knew nothing that bore upon the tragedy. So, grunting, Burke remarked that perhaps something in Blanding's letters might establish some relation between the two murdered men.

"Why?" said Cavasan. "You know," he added slyly, "they didn't kill each other, Inspector." He turned, without waiting for the other's retort, to the superintendent. "On what floor is Henry Garrison's apartment?" he demanded.

"Across the hall from this one," was the reply.

Cavasan felt his heart beating faster. "Do you—happen to know if the two men knew each other?" he demanded.

The superintendent shook his head. "I'm quite positive that they did not," he answered. "I've seen them in the hall, passing each other, and they never spoke."

"What's the big idea?" cried Burke. Cavasan nodded to the superintendent.

"That will be all," he said. The superintendent looked at Burke, and that mystified gentleman nodded permission to leave. He was hardly through the door when Burke exclaimed:

"Stevie, facts take off their hats to theory. What's the idea?"

Cavasan lighted a cigarette. "Inspector do I get this exclusively in the *Moon* tomorrow morning?"

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"It's all yours, Stevie," was the reply. "Come through."

Cavasan obeyed him. Minutely he detailed his suspicions, his theories, his reasoning. Raptly Burke listened. At its conclusion he heaved a sigh.

"Telephone downstairs," said Cavasan. "Tell the telephone operator to telephone you the minute Garrison comes in."

Burke reached for the telephone and gave the requested order. He put the instrument down and turned to Cavasan. Then the bell rang and he put the receiver to his ear. "All right," he said.

He put the telephone down. "Garrison just came in. He's on his way up. What now? Shall I pinch him quickly, or—"

"Hold off—a minute," said Cavasan. He rose and walked to the door that opened upon the elevator. "Stay inside, but—if he's ugly—come out."

The Inspector patted his hip pocket. "I got the best cure for ugly dispositions ever invented right here," he said. "But don't you take any risk—"

I want to make the case sure—now," said Cavasan. He stepped into the hall and closed the door behind him. Impatiently he waited, staring at the elevator shaft from which rose the drone of the ascending lift. In a moment it appeared, stopped; a man emerged from the cage and the machine descended.

He was the man whom Cavasan had seen in the "Trois Hommes" last evening. Eagerly he eyed the man, who paid him no attention, but walked to the door opposite and inserted a key in the lock. Then Cavasan spoke.

"Beg pardon," he said, "but—would your key fit this lock?"

He spoke in the most casual tones. Garrison turned. "Why, I—hardly think so," he said pleasantly. "But perhaps I have one that would—" He stopped short. "You'd better telephone downstairs," he added curtly.

"Burke!" shouted Cavasan.

Like a flash the Inspector was through the door and in the room. "Well?" he demanded.

"I am sure," said Cavasan, "that this gentleman, Mr. Garrison, has something to say to you. Mr. Garrison, Inspector Burke. Of the Police Department," he concluded.

There was a stillness, broken only by the elevator's whine as the lift descended. Then, suddenly, Garrison's hand went to his mouth. Burke saw the move and leaped, but he was too late. The man slumped, would have fallen to the floor but for Burke's sustaining arms.

They carried him into his own apartment and placed him in a chair, where for a moment he sat upright, cool, saturnine. Burke ran to the telephone to summon a doctor, but both he and Cavasan knew it was too late. So did the dying man. But by a mighty effort he roused himself from the coma that was coming upon him.

"How'd—you—know?" he demanded.

Cavasan shook his head. "Why?" He countered. "Why did you do it?" For this was the vital question, the question of motive which, despite Garrison's suicidal confession, would enshroud the case in mystery unless the dying man answered.

But Garrison's eyes changed from only coolness to sudden hate, that hate which had driven him to madness.

"Hated him—hated her. Her mother—years ago—refused me. Hated her, her husband, her daughter. Blanding—a few years ago—he was younger—handsome—went to a girl—I was interested in—took her away. Swore—I'd get square and—when I knew—learned from Allan Grant—that Blanding—was lying—about him—to Folly Dare—my old hate rose in me—"

He gulped feebly. His eyes began to glaze. Cavasan, and Burke, too, who had joined the newspaperman, bent closer to the dying man's lips.

"Hated—Folly Dare," gasped Garrison. "Didn't want Grant—son of my good friend—to marry—Lucy Carter's daughter. Didn't want her either—to throw him over—because of what Blanding might have told her—get square—both of them—kill Blanding—make it look as though—Folly—did it—"

And that was all. His insane mind—for murderers must be insane—was at peace at last.

Half an hour later, an examination of Garrison's effects having disclosed the fact that he possessed a score of time-yellowed photographs of Lucy Carter, Folly Dare's mother, and a revolver with a silencer having been found, and the proper authorities having removed what remained of the mad murderer, Burke asked Cavasan a question.

"Why did you ask him to unlock Blanding's door?"

"Because," replied Cavasan, "there was only one missing link—the substitution of the loaded pistol. If Garrison lived next door to Blanding, that gave him opportunity. I've been too busy to read the late editions today and keep up with the routine news of the case. That's why I was so surprised. I asked Garrison if he could unlock the door to see what he'd say. He replied—you heard. He said that perhaps he had one—then checked himself. It was admission that he had. How easy for him to have entered Blanding's apartment sometime yesterday or the day before and substituted the loaded gun."

"Why?" demanded Burke.

"You heard him say why. He hated Folly. If he involved her in a scandal it would ruin her."

"He musta been plain crazy," commented Burke.

For an hour, that night, Cavasan sat before his typewriter, unable to think of a "lead" for his story. He thought of the reception that must have been given Folly Dare by tonight's audience. For, of course, Mannheim, informed by Burke of the clearance of Folly's name from all suspicion, would have passed on that information to the audience. He knew that Folly had responded to the greeting the audience must have extended to her. Her performance tonight would excel, if anything, last night's greatness. . . . A genius! A great actress, destined to be a world figure! And he was Stephen Cavasan, a mere sleuth reporter, who hoped to be a great writer, but wasn't yet, who couldn't be sure that he would be. . . . What a fool he was!

Then he bent to his work. Some other man would write the story of the audience's reception of the news of the discovery of the murderer. He would write a straight-away yarn, a somewhat gruesome yarn,

THE END

telling of the office building superintendent's identification of Garrison as Bolster, of the further identification of Garrison as the make-believe fire inspector—all the details of his sleuthing that annoyed him, because they seemed to keep him from finer work. . . .

Yet into his story crept bits of quaint philosophy, of observation, of fine writing that made Cavasan's present notable for the potentialities of his future. . . . He forgot everything, forgot even Ffolliott Dare, so engrossing was his work. . . .

It was midnight when he pulled the last sheet from his typewriter. He had written steadily, without pause save to light cigarettes, since nine o'clock. He rose, passed his last sheet of writing to the copy boy, and stretched his aching arms. He looked about him and saw the beaming face of Benny Mannheim.

"Hel-lo," he said dully. He was too exhausted to show or feel much surprise. Mannheim said nothing for a moment. He merely took Cavasan's right hand in both of his own and pressed it. Cavasan noted that his eyes were filled with tears. Then, over Mannheim's shoulder, he saw Perry. The managing editor beckoned to him imperatively.

"Excuse me a minute, Benny," he said. He walked toward Perry, where the latter stood in the door of his office.

"Come in," said Perry. He stepped aside and Cavasan felt the editor's hand on his shoulder, impelling him through the door. Then it slammed behind him and he was alone in the room with Ffolliott Dare! She was standing by Perry's desk, one hand resting on it, the other extended toward Cavasan.

He felt the blood rushing into his cheeks; his ears seemed to buzz; his eyes were suddenly filled with tears. He advanced toward her and took the hand that she held out to him. Then his head bent down and his lips approached the soft palm. But she drew it away.

"Stevie Cavasan," she said, "years ago you didn't like it when I tried to kiss you."

He mastered himself with difficulty. "I was a fool, Miss Dare," he said. "Please don't—make a fool of me—again."

She smiled. "A fool of you?"

His eyes cleared of their blur now; he met her glance fairly. "Miss Dare," he said, "you are engaged to another man. If you, through any sense of gratitude, should kiss me—I'd kill that other man!"

He almost meant it, too. Her smile grew wider.

"Mr. Cavasan, I'm not engaged to another man. I never was. I may have thought of it, but—I'm not thinking of it now."

"You're not?" Cavasan's shoulders squared. "Then by—Miss Dare—if you're not engaged to anyone, why—I'm going to kiss you, Folly Dare."

She colored deeply. "That's what I came down here for, Stevie Cavasan. Several years ago you were most discourteous; you repelled a lady's amorous advances in a most brutal and uncouth fashion, and—"

He was brutal now as he seized her; he might also have been termed uncouth. Stephen Cavasan was not used to kissing girls. He lacked practice. But, since Ffolliott Dare was an amateur at the art, neither could find fault with the other.

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Who's Drinking in America?

(Continued from page 31)

I knew he spoke truly. It doesn't take much investigation along the Florida coast to know that the old Gulp Stream is now one of the many slips "twixt the cup and the lip" for most American drinkers today.

A dozen ships passed us in both directions that lazy Sunday afternoon. Indeed, there was always a ship in sight. They reminded you of rambling promenaders on the boulevard of some tropical town.

Bored passengers came to the rails and gazed wildly at our little boat, which, to them, seemed so far from shore. From stinking rooms poured men, waving glasses.

I looked at one of the ships and tell me how you can stop the booze business in the United States?" said my guide. "Any one of those ships could lower a dozen cases of whisky down on to our launch, and we could run back to shore and land in any one of a thousand different bays and inlets."

I looked northward down the Stream. I thought of the ports along the Atlantic coast into which these ships might put—Savannah, Charleston, Philadelphia, New York and Boston. In Savannah a year ago whisky was a scarcity. Now it sells there for five or six dollars a quart. In Charleston a crate of twelve bottles of whisky now costs only thrice the price of pre-Prohibition days. I remembered the eighteen-dollar-a-bottle days in New York City and Boston, and then considered the present price of six dollars, which prevails at this writing. Away from this old Gulp Stream, men in the United States still pay the old prices of twenty dollars and more a quart. Your inland man in Minneapolis, Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis, Denver or Salt Lake City must still pay out his one hundred dollars for five bottles of whisky; but, beside paying for the running of these boats in the Gulf Stream, he is paying also for hundreds of miles of night-running by automobiles on the bootleggers' routes that today lace the United States.

It takes a good many little boats like ours, putting out from shore to meet the

iron ships, to keep the Atlantic coast wet. It is not in such ports of Charleston and New York, indeed, that whisky is landed on our dry American soil. There are hundreds of secret hiding places along the Atlantic coast. It is a safe calculation, made by enforcement department experts, that at least 2,000 owners of small boats along the Eastern coast of the United States are in the rum business. And how many

routes from the Atlantic coast, nor the cars that run southward from the Canadian border, nor northward from the Mexican border, nor inland from the ports of the Pacific Coast.

These big boats that ply the Gulp Stream with liquor have set a vast machinery to working in the United States. I made up a sailor's song as we started back to land. It was a Twentieth century

Prohibition-time, sailors' song. It was all about "rolling up the old Gulp Stream" and keeping your "eyes peeled" for the little boats that pull out from the "dry, dry land" for their little cargoes of "rum."

My trip of that day into the Gulp Stream was only part of an extensive investigation of the entire Prohibition question in the United States. I hope in succeeding articles to lay out, in reporter's style, the facts about Prohibition and its workings in our entire country. I went to Florida first because I had received the information that Florida is about the wettest portion of the Union.

As I have said, Florida is not the only leak-hole into America. There are the Canadian border points, which the enforcement officers have not been able to plug. There is the Mexican line, which admits into the United States the vilest and most dangerous liquor that finds its way into our land; and there are the West spots along the Pacific coast where alleged Irish whisky is the drink, and where bootleggers tell you, "this came up the coast from Chile." These centers of liquor

smuggling will be discussed later in these articles.

But preliminary investigations indicated that Florida is the wettest intake in the United States. Florida, in itself, for this reason, is a study in the problem of Prohibition. Within a few weeks leisurely folk will be finding their way down to Florida by railroad and automobile to escape the Northern winters. This year they will find Florida wetter than last. I am prepared to say that the Florida coast resorts this winter will not be dry.

Who has stopped drinking in the United States?

This is a digest of figures compiled by Mr. Shepherd from investigations made by various civic bodies and industrial concerns.

Adult males in the United States..... 35,000,000
Estimated number of teetotalers..... 15,000,000

Number of drinkers before Prohibition. 20,000,000

Regular saloon drinkers who have been forced to stop daily drinking..... 1,000,000

Pay-day night drinkers who have stopped.. 12,000,000

Occasional drinkers..... 4,500,000

17,000,000

Number of pre-Prohibition drinkers..... 20,000,000

Number who have stopped regular drinking 17,500,000

Number of remaining drinkers..... 2,500,000

Of these, "opportunist" drinkers are believed to number..... 1,500,000

Steady drinkers..... 1,000,000

Estimated quarts smuggled or distilled this year..... 50,000,000

Withdrawals from bond in quarts..... 30,000,000

Eighty million quarts of alcohol a year to satisfy the wants of 2,500,000 drinkers gives each drinker an average of thirty-two quarts a year. This means a little over one pint a week, with equal distribution.

One hundred and forty quarts a year was about the American drinking man's average in 1917.

automobiles must come to these secret places to get their cargoes and carry them along the booze routes to the men who want alcohol to drink!

Forty automobiles, one night not long ago, met a little schooner which landed on the shores of Long Island to deposit a small cargo of whisky. Forty automobiles to each of 2,000 boats means 80,000 automobiles in the liquor business on the Atlantic coast!

And these do not include the long-distance automobiles that cover the inland

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In making this statement I am granting that our Prohibition enforcement officers are, in general, doing their best; that our officials at Washington seem to be in dead earnest about Prohibition enforcement. But I base my statement on the fact that, unless the United States Army and the United States Navy are put on the job of keeping Florida and its surrounding waters, as well as the Eastern Atlantic coast, in a state of dryness, there will be no dryness.

In making this declaration I am not "picking on" Florida. And I will not anger many citizens there by my statement. There is a general belief in Florida that tourists delight in finding wet spots for their vacations. Americans don't stay dry. At home they are in favor of Prohibition; when they go a-visiting, it is often another matter. In my rambles through half a dozen Florida towns, for instance, I could not find any figures in any official or commercial circles that would indicate what Prohibition had done for Florida. Business men, hotel keepers, chambers of commerce members—none of them likes to talk about Prohibition. While Florida does not boast of this fact—that she will be wet this winter—Florida doesn't care what prospective tourists know it.

In the Palm Beach district last year there were never more than twelve enforcement officers. If there are ten times more Prohibition officers than that in the seaside resorts this winter, they cannot keep the places dry. One small reason for this—though there is a vastly larger one—is that a Federal judge in Florida has recently ruled that no boat, automobile, house or premises can be searched by an officer without a search warrant "served between sunrise and sunset." That ruling makes Florida wet.

But the real reason for the wetness of Florida is this: Florida is important in the present alcoholic scheme of things. Look at Florida on the map. Florida is America's tongue. It is the long, slender, lapping thirsty tongue of the drinking folks of the United States reaching out to the Bahamas and Cuba and beyond. If the United States behind Florida were not thirsty, Florida would not be wet. There would be no temptation for business men to invest large sums in the liquor business; there would be no occasion for "traveling men" from Florida to rustle around the Northern country taking orders for all the liquor they can promise to supply. But the United States is thirsty, in spots, and the capillary attraction of the tongue of the United States for the alcohol in the warehouses of the Bahamas and Cuba is like irresistible gravitation. Much of this vacuum-like suction comes through Florida—and makes Florida wet.

Across the Gulf Stream from Florida she finds willing helpers. The Bahama Islands have literally gone into the liquor business. Small boats which run the forty miles across the Stream find floating warehouses waiting for them. A flock of schooners and small steamboats—sometimes as many as thirty-five—gather in groups off the Bahama shores. Between their masts or fastened to their sides are such signs as these: "Buy from Us." "We'll Load It For You." "All Kinds of Liquor." "Wholesale or Retail Liquors." "Our Prices Are Low." The little boats from Florida draw up alongside one of these floating warehouses and buy all the whisky they please at

about three dollars a quart. This may be Scotch whisky, or it may be American, once exported from the United States to foreign lands where speculators found that foreigners refused to drink it. Anyway, it is home again.

The Nassau colonial government, of course, does nothing to prevent the growth of the liquor business in the Bahamas. Indeed, they have often given the business a helping hand. The island of Bimini, for instance, twenty-five years ago had a commissioner, appointed by the Nassau government; his duty was to keep order among the negroes. His duties were so light that he was finally recalled. But two years ago, when a group of American business men decided to establish a fine hotel at Bimini for Americans who wished to travel from once-dry Florida to a wet land, the Nassau officials granted the hotel concession to the Americans with alacrity, and returned to the island a British commissioner, who acts as justice of the peace and has charge of the police. The American capitalists, by the way, have built for him a splendid home, and before the home was ready for occupancy, the commissioner lived at the splendid new hotel. The Nassau officials and the business men of the Bahamas are willing enough to help Florida and whoever else wants to engage in the liquor business.

"It's just like the old days here," said a young matron in Miami. "Of course, there aren't any saloons, but you merely add a bootlegger to the iceman, the milkman, the grocery man and the meat man. He comes to your house for orders and he can supply you with anything you want. It really isn't good form any more to offer your guests a certain drink. We've got back to the old 'What'll-you-have' days! If you haven't got everything in your house, you're not quite it."

All the French liqueurs and brandies, all the foreign wines including sherry and Madeira, and, in fact, all the drinks known to the outside world, are obtainable in Florida. And all this is because Florida is on the firing line. She is one of the chief nozzle-ends of the American vacuum pump.

I noted when I talked with enforcement officers, sheriffs, town marshals and other officers in Florida towns—and most of them seem to be in deadly earnest about Prohibition enforcement—that they had reached a state of desperation. They couldn't understand why they were not able to keep Florida dry. None of them seems to realize that they were fighting a vacuum that came not from Florida but from hundreds of other places in the United States.

For example, wherever I went in Florida I heard about "Marshal Cox, of Tampa." "There's the toughest booze chaser of them all," I was told. "He's killed a lot of men. He goes out into the Gulf and fights with the smugglers on their ships. He has a fleet of ships he has seized tied up in the river at Tampa. He's a wonder. All the decent citizens are for him. You see Cox." And so I did. I entered his room in the post office building at Tampa. Lying on a leather couch I saw a slender, lean-faced man. About his waist was a cartridge belt. In a holster, attached thereto, was a big revolver.

I told him I had come to talk to him about Prohibition. He heaved a giant's sigh.

"Young fellow," he said, "I'm all in.

What with rambling around these swamps and killin' moonshiners and gettin' shot at and bein' bit by mosquitoes, I've got the shakin' fever, and I jes' can't go out today. I know where I can get a schooner full o' liquor this minute. But I ain't got the men and I'm a-shakin' so, I jes' can't shoot."

He rose to a sitting position.

"Stay down," I suggested.

"I'm too miserable to lie down. I don't want you to think I ain't a-doin' nothin' jes' cause you ketch me sick. I'm goin' to take you in my flivver down to see the fleet I ketched."

He took me down to the street, put me in a rattly old car that shook as much as he did, and drove me down to the river. There he had eight schooners and launches which he had commandeered.

"Now, all these fellers were bad men," he said. "One o' these boats had twenty-two Chinamen on it, being smuggled into the United States, as well as liquor. Most of these fellers were in the smuggling business before we had any Prohibition. They used to smuggle silks and Chinamen into the country. But now they've got something to smuggle about. This whisky business makes it fine for 'em. They're making real money now. It don't mean nothing to them to have me take one little schooner away from 'em. They jes' go and git another and start out again. They're all rich. But I'm keepin' after 'em, dog-gone 'em!"

"Can you get them all?" I asked.

"Well, I don't want to say until after I've tried it for about fifty years," he drawled, with a sickly, yellow smile. "But I would like a regiment of troops, watching the land, and half a dozen of these here destroyer boats, with cannons on 'em, to help me," he said.

Not long before this a palm forest took fire in Florida. Autoists came from miles around to see the blaze. During the fire there were three distinct explosions.

"I don't believe they's a grove of trees in Florida that hain't got some still into it," explained Cox.

Two days before I met Cox, he and three assistants—one of whom, named Williams, has since been made chief of police of Tampa because of his anti-whisky crusades—attacked an island, wading hip-deep in water. Distillers on the island opened fire on the wading men, and Cox, stopping deliberately in the swamp, took aim and put a rifle bullet through the head of the moonshiners' chief. The next moment Cox's hat was knocked off by a bullet. A photograph, shown in this article, gives some idea of the size of the still which was seized in that raid.

On another occasion Cox seized a schooner near a little Gulf Coast town which is occupied almost entirely by Greeks. This time his men used sawed-off shotguns. They fired the first shots and captured the crew, with a cargo of whisky. During the night the watchman whom Cox left on the boat heard strange sounds below decks. Like a wise officer he listened and kept quiet. The next morning when a Government crew came to take the boat into port, the watchman told of what he had heard. Cox went down into the hold of the little schooner. High up on a shelf, hidden in the darkness, he saw gleaming eyes—"thousands of 'em, it seemed to me," he told me.

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"Come out of there!" he ordered, turning his shotgun into the darkness. One Chinaman tumbled off the shelf, then another and another, until twenty-two in all stood in a miserable, hungry, thirsty group around the marshal. They had paid \$1,000 apiece to be smuggled into the United States.

"Twenty-two thousand dollars from Chinamen, and \$80,000 worth of whisky in one trip," said Cox. You could 'a bought the little schooner for \$5,000. Pretty good business, ain't it?"

If anyone doubts Cox's shooting ability, there is the case of the county commissioner, from a nearby county, who had whisky in his car to Cox's certain knowledge. But in the car also were three boys, the eldest twelve, who sat in the rear seat as camouflage.

Riding in another speeding car, Cox pulled out his revolver and, trusting to his skill, punctured both rear tires of the runaway. "I knew I wouldn't hit the boys," they say Cox reported. "If I hadn't 'a been sure, I wouldn't 'a fired."

"Sawed-off shotguns is best for ship work," explained Cox to me. "You can cover a lot o' men with a sawed-off shotgun. It's like a cross-eyed man—you can't tell exactly where it's a-pintin'. I use my sawed-off gun for boat work, my rifle for huntin' stills in the swamps and my revolvers for town raids."

In another Florida town I met a young enforcement Prohibition officer who had sent into the Washington office the names of twenty-two business men in his district who, he charged, were lending money to bootleggers at high prices.

"I can't arrest them," said the young man. "They aren't bootleggers; they're only conspirators, helping bootleggers to break the law. But I got one of them," he said triumphantly.

"How?" I asked.
"In my lodge," he answered. "One of these rich men in this town, that I was on to, tried to get into my lodge. It's the best lodge in town. I laid for him until initiation night. Then, when he was almost through with the ceremony, I stepped up before a roomful of three hundred men and I said, 'I'd like to ask this candidate some questions!' He turned white, but the others told me to go ahead. I asked him a question about every loan he had ever made to bootleggers. I gave him names and dates, and I asked him if every incident I mentioned wasn't true. He tried to wiggle out and say it wasn't fair. But it was the only way I could get him, and I did get him, too. He was turned out of the lodge, and now every business man in town knows he's as bad as a bootlegger."

"You'll get them all rounded up in town—some day," I suggested hopefully.

"I don't know," he said. "You can't lick a whole community. All the people who live in the little houses in this town, the people who ain't rich, are for Prohibition. It seems to me as if all the people in the big houses are against it."

This young man had seized private cars containing liquor. He had seized private yachts and launches. He had found a great cache of liquor in a semi-public building where President-elect Harding had been entertained only a few weeks before. The President must have sat within fifteen feet of the hoard, which was bricked into the wall.

"We're after them here," he said, "but we can't finish them up. There are rich men in this town, with fast motor boats, who will hurry out to meet a schooner that they know we're after and turn her into some other point. This coast is almost 2,000 miles long and it's full of coves and swamps and jungles. Almost everywhere you turn there's a still going. The poor people drink the still whisky and the rich people drink the imported." Prominent business men in Florida, at this writing, have been arrested on conspiracy charges of supplying money to bootleggers.

The upshot of all that you discover in Florida—or anywhere else in the United States for that matter—is the conclusion that the bootlegger is the product of a demand for liquor. He isn't a good salesman, the bootlegger. He doesn't have to create a market and educate it to the use of his wares. The market is there for him. The United States used to spend two and a half billion dollars a year for alcoholic drinks. It still has this sum to spend—temptation to many men—if it can find the drinks. American drinkers will probably spend \$500,000,000 for drinks in 1921, and will get only one-fourth of the drinks they could have bought for the same money in the days before Prohibition. The demand for alcoholic drinks in the United States is large. The liquor market is the best market, with the liveliest and best paying demand that any salesman has ever had in the United States.

Bootlegging is almost irresistible. In a Northern state I met a man who had been head waiter in a chief restaurant in a Middle-Western town. He was in "liquor circles" when I encountered him.

"I'm bootlegging now," he said. "In the summer, when it's too hot down South, I come up here and run booze across the Canadian border. But running booze up here in the winter time is no snap. It's too cold. I go down to Florida in the winter time."

"I don't like the business," he explained. "It's too dangerous. But I've got \$60,000 put away in a New York bank for one year's work and I keep another \$20,000 with me for working capital. Just as soon as I see by my bank that I have \$200,000 in that bank in New York, I'm through."

"Aren't you afraid of going to jail?" I asked, knowing he had a family.

"No, no!" he said. "My customers are all high class, influential men. The courts are always easy if you do get caught, and I've got money ready for that. The only thing I'm afraid of is the pirate bootleggers, up North here and down South too. They try to keep track of the regular, honest bootlegger. If they can catch him with a load of liquor, they use their guns to take it away from him. They'll kill you, too, if they take a notion to. I've had two loads taken from me in Florida. I always say, 'Well, don't shoot. You've got it, haven't you?' So far I haven't met with violence, but I know a lot of regular bootleggers who have been killed by pirates. Of course, if they do steal your load from you, you haven't any comeback. You just kiss it good by and go out for another. Down in Florida we never land our boats twice in the same place along the coast. We're not afraid of being caught by the officers, but it's the pirates we're looking out for."

And then he explained a mystery to me.

"You keep reading in the newspapers

these days about somebody being found dead along a road or in the street of some city. It's the booze pirates. Either a pirate has been killed or a regular bootlegger. You see neither side can go to law. It's a matter of life and death. Naw! This bootlegging business isn't for me after I've made my pile. It's the easiest money in the world."

I contrasted, in my mind, his picture of murder and theft and utter lawlessness with a scene in the drawing room of the villa of the Florida society woman who said, "You're nobody if you don't have anything in the house that a guest can ask for."

A drink means something these days wherever you find it in the United States.

The creation of bootleggers by Americans with money, supposed upholders of law and order, who speak of "personal liberty" and the "sanctity of law" goes on apace. There are towns in this United States where leading citizens have actually created "booze routes" and set young men up in business so that they will have constant supplies of liquor in their homes.

I am going to give the verified story of a Southern business man as he told it in the smoking room of a trans-continental train. He was on his way home from a convention in Los Angeles. As is always the case in every smoking room on American trains these days, the talk turned to Prohibition.

"Well, we had plenty of it in Los Angeles, my little crowd did. Some of our friends gave us bales of doctors' prescriptions. They told us to buy our whisky by the pint in drug stores. 'Don't drink any of this bootleg stuff,' they said. 'It comes from Mexico and it's poison.' My little crowd got all it wanted."

When we got to talking about our own home-town problems, this Southern planter, who is well known in his community and who employs several hundred negroes, said:

"Well, we've got it all fixed up in our town now. We used to be able to get only gin, but a few of us got together and bought a car for a young man in our town and said to him: 'Jim, you run down to Biloxi and see what you can find in the way of liquor. Bring us back what you can get and we'll fix it up with you.' Well, it was a five-hundred mile run but the boy started out, and he came back with as nice a load of real red whisky as ever you did see. He does it regularly now. He travels at night and sleeps in the daytime. He's got his regular places where he stops and where a sheriff or somebody locks up the car for him and takes care of it while he gets his rest." (This man was describing definitely one of the main booze runs which lace the United States and which will be described in a later article.) "He sells us the liquor for \$6 a quart and he pays \$4. He carries it to my house and to the judge's and to several other places. We don't calculate to have him sell his liquor to anybody else in our town. We want things decent and orderly."

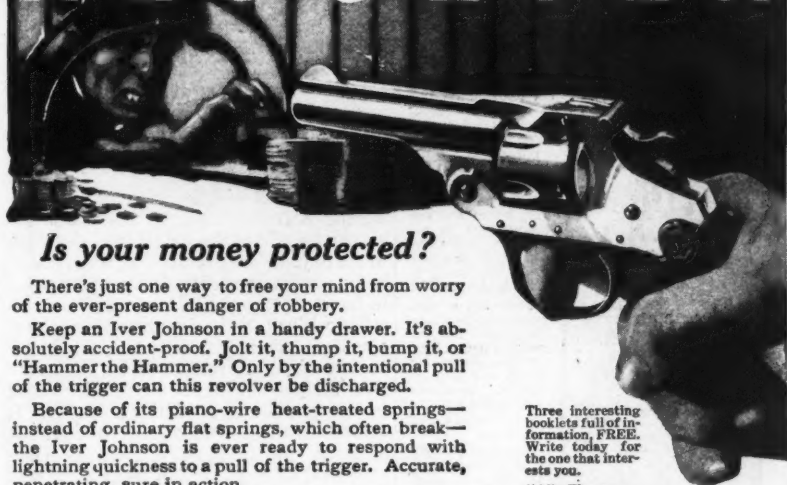
I put it to him cold, just for fun.

"I think," I said, in so many words, "that this is a disgraceful breach of the law."

"Young man," he said, while the others in the smoking room listened, "my state of Louisiana never went dry for white folks. There isn't any just law down there against

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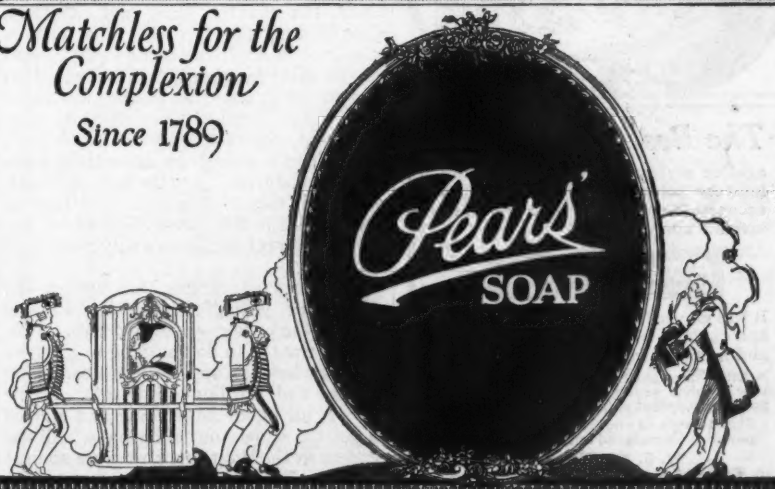
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liquor. Whenever we voted dry by local option we were voting the niggers dry. My niggers are dry and I'm going to keep 'em dry."

"That's the way to do it," said another traveler. "We had a bootlegger in our town that the business men couldn't trust. We found him handling bad liquor. We just naturally had him arrested, and then we set up a young fellow in business that we could trust. He gets our liquor for us reasonably and we can depend on him. He turns his liquor over to the grocery man and the grocer's boy brings it. We all have regular standing orders with him. He gets it in some town along the Gulf coast."

This interest of influential men in bootlegging is traced back, by those who are giving thought to the Prohibition question, to the days before Prohibition, when everybody who had any money or was supposed to have any money laid in supplies of alcoholic drinks. It became the thing to have a cellar. The larger the cellar, the larger one's pocketbook seemed to be. No man who was anybody in a community dared to say that he was not filling his cellar. It was a legal thing to do; a great drought was in sight; the hospitality of future days depended upon filling the cellar there and then. And so American cellars in apartment houses and hotel rooms and elsewhere were supposedly filled to the kitchen floor. Time has emptied these cellars, and it has emptied, in great part, the reserve stocks of whisky in the bonded warehouses. But hospitality could not be abated. The cellar must seem full, even if it isn't. And so the family bootlegger has come into his own.

There is one outstanding and puzzling fact which I hope to set forth more fully in future articles. This has to do with the humor with which the American people view the Prohibition laws. No one can deny, who makes any study of the Prohibition situation, that three-quarters of the citizens of these States are dry. Three-quarters of this country was dry, by local laws, before we had Federal Prohibition. About eleven million little homes, in each of which an American man and an American woman are bringing up an American family, are dry. The homes contain the voters who sent to Congress the lawmakers who passed the Prohibition law. All the talk around the big cities, in the clubs and cafés and apartment houses, about the country being wet at heart, doesn't alter the fact that the average middle-class American home is dry. And yet we all joke about Prohibition. Men who are dry by conviction make jokes about the law and laugh at jokes about it. Enforcement officers and officials of all sorts, everywhere I have been, have their jokes about Prohibition. And the wets, of course, have their excruciating fun. But there is another side to this humor. I shall ask one of the editors of the Kansas City Star to set it forth for us:

"Our newspaper has been against the saloon for years," he said. "Colonel Nelson, the owner, discovered that whenever he wanted to do anything to improve the city he was opposed by the saloon keepers and the liquor interests. So he cut out all liquor advertising and started to put the saloons out of business. All our readers in the West knew we were against alcohol. It was a fine thing for our paper and it was a fine thing for the rest.

"But how does it go now? We continually find ourselves making light of the Prohibition amendment or the Volstead act. This humor comes to us through news channels; it comes to us through syndicate cartoons. The joke of Prohibition is constantly creeping into our columns. Now we seem to be laughing at the attempts to stop the very thing which we ourselves spent years trying to stop. We don't mean to laugh at it. The newspapers and the cartoonists, reflecting public whim or thought, naturally join in on the humorous side of Prohibition. But the day may come when orders will go out on good newspapers that there is to be no more joking about law breaking."

This joking has appeared only recently and it gives occasion to describe the three stages through which Prohibition has passed in the public mind. This joking stage is the third. If this is the last and final stage, then Prohibition has been laughed out of court, in the old American fashion, and the United States is going to be wet, though saloonless. The fourth stage, if there will be one—and there is every reason for an observer who has scoured the country as I have to believe that there will be a fourth stage—will have few laughs in it.

The first stage of national Prohibition found the American public in a state of wonderment. America was dry for a time. In the warehouses were some 150,000,000 gallons of liquor in bond, but it was behind locks and in Uncle Sam's care. It was a desperate man who tried to sell liquor in those days. Arrests for drunkenness fell off to almost nothing. The psychopathic wards of the hospitals in the big cities were absolutely empty. America was dry, almost teetotally so. Now and then some one went into cahoots with some undertaker and tried to peddle embalming fluid as a booze. The sale of flavoring extracts containing alcohol rose astonishingly, but in the main the men of the United States went without their drinks. We were not only dry, but we expected to remain dry.

And then came the second stage. This began when some one began to dip into the liquor supply in the bonded warehouses. In various ways, by hook and by crook, often through politics and more often through graft, the doors of the bonded warehouses began to open. The liquor was removed ostensibly for medical purposes or for manufacturing purposes. In 1919 we used 100,000,000 gallons of whisky from the warehouses; we used to take out more than thrice that much. It found its way to the larger cities, where it brought high prices. Americans who had money to spend, and whose supply, purchased before National Prohibition went into effect, was coming to an end, paid the high prices with a chuckle.

At Washington the officials said: "Well, some of that bonded liquor was bound to find its way into wrong hands. We couldn't help it, what with politics and all. But when the supply in the bonded warehouses is gone, then this country goes dry. It may be difficult for us to control the bonded warehouse supply of booze that is already made; but when this booze is gone, where will Americans get any more? We can easily control the manufacture of alcohol. Maybe it would be best to let Americans drink up the whisky in the warehouses and have it over with. The



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sooner the supply is gone the sooner we'll be dry."

And so we passed through the stage of guzzling away at our bonded warehouse supply. About 5,000,000 drinking men in the United States got five gallons per head during the first year of Prohibition; the rest of the 100,000,000 gallons went for manufacturing. Men made fortunes who secured withdrawal permits from the Government. It is said that one of the candidates for the nomination for the Presidency, last election time, secured the support of strong politicians in his State, who fought for him to the last on the convention floor, by securing withdrawal permits for them.

We drank up half of the bonded warehouse reserve in a year. And then there came a new deal in government and the warehouse doors were closed. We were entering the third stage of Prohibition. With manufacturers unable to make new whisky and with only the liquor brewed in homes or surreptitiously in stills, it looked as if the dry day had come. We were at the end of our reserves. Enforcement officials sighed with relief. What were the drinkers of the United States going to do now?

And then the Prohibition enforcement officers discovered the great blue Gulp Stream, which I have already described. They had not figured on smuggling. Indeed, they knew nothing about smuggling. Smuggling didn't come up in the Prohibition enforcement department. It was a thing that belonged to the Internal Revenue Department.

When smuggling began in a small way, the Prohibition men were able more or less to control it. But when "big money" got in behind the smugglers, the Prohibition men found themselves swamped.

Soon Americans found some liquor—either a little or a lot—almost everywhere; that is, Americans who had money. Automobile routes for transporting liquor from the seaboard sprang up in every direction. The remotest towns began to greet bootleggers who came from faraway parts with liquor from Scotland, Ireland and elsewhere. And then we Americans began to laugh. We had said we were going to have Prohibition; we had all taken Prohibition seriously; and now, though we still had Prohibition, we nevertheless had booze. If that wasn't funny, the American "wanted to know."

"Isn't this Prohibition law a joke?" was a question that everyone asked everyone else. That question, indeed, is the slogan of the third period of Prohibition.

For the fourth period we must wait. And when it comes, as I have said, there will be no laugh in it. This alcohol which is being vacuumed through Florida and from along the Gulf Stream, from Mexico and Canada, is hitting the United States in a place where alcohol has never hit it before. It is hitting it, not in the homes of the poor and the lowly nor in the middle class homes, where it strikes rarely, but in the very homes and at the very hearths of the higher class families of the land. It is reaching cellars that were once legally stocked for hospitality's sake. It is carrying sorrow and disgrace with it.

Let me give an example. It will suggest other instances to readers in their own towns. I have heard scores of such stories as I am about to relate, but I tell this story about a Kansas town, because Kansas,

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for two generations, has been supposed to be dry.

When the boys and girls of this Kansas town came home from school last summer, ready for three months of play, a dance was given for them at the country club. Their families, of course, were the upper class, so called leading families of the community. The happy-faced boys and girls came out in their best evening clothes and rolled to the dance in the family machine.

After the first dance the floor seemed to be swept clear as if by panic. The boys and girls rushed outdoors to the automobiles and scrambled in, six or eight to a car. And then bottles came off youthful hips—bottles, in most cases, filled from Dad's supply in the cellar; and these bottles were passed around as they might have been passed at a hobo campfire, from laughing boyish mouth to dimpling girlish mouth—fiery whisky, without a chaser, in true drunkard style. When the music started again, the automobiles emptied. After the next dance there was another rush to the cars. By eleven o'clock what would otherwise have been that fine, democratic American social institution, a young folk's dance at the country club, had come to an end. The orchestra played to an almost empty floor. Down in the cars were maudlin schoolboys and schoolgirls, drunk on whisky which had come from "Dad's cellar."

I have the word of folks in this town that the old joke about having "something in the cellar," or "hootch on the hip," or "a limousine bar," isn't a joke any longer. There were fathers in that town last summer who closed out their cellars; said "they wouldn't have the stuff around." There are boys, who, inspired by "Dad's hootch," get liquor where they can. And the girls of that town, whose elder sisters, at least, would never have thought of associating with a young man who was so depraved as to carry whisky around with him "on his hip" and invite them to drink with him between dances, think nothing of drinking from a bottle during the summer evening rides.

I let the story end here. It goes farther, but its end is obvious.

Whoever reads these lines will know of some such story in his own neighborhood. Almost every country club in America has its scandal which has grown out of limousine drinking. Whisky, from a cellar that never used to hold liquor, drunk at table—because it is the smart thing to do these days—where liquor was never taken before, served before clean-cut American boys and girls, who might never otherwise have known the presence of liquor in their homes—liquor of this sort is this minute hitting the United States in a part where it was never hit before, and where it cannot afford to be hit.

It may be considered smart in small town society to have "booze" in your cellar, but it cannot be considered smart to have your daughters and sons, not yet out of school, plundering this cellar for whisky, like common drunkards. And the fourth stage of Prohibition in the United States is likely to come when American fathers and mothers make this discovery.

While Americans are in the laughing period, tolerant because of our surprise and mirth, the anti-Prohibition elements have been taking advantage of the situation. Here and there breweries are making real

beer at the time this article is written. In New Orleans, not long ago, a number of breweries by common agreement decided that the time had come to laugh Prohibition out of effect, so far as it concerned beer. They sent the real beer out of their breweries. It found its way to soda fountains, cold drink stands, and to restaurants and cafés. Ten days elapsed before the Federal Prohibition officials could gather enough men together to seize the breweries. The plants were closed, their pipes sealed, they agreed to pay fines aggregating more than \$100,000 in penalty taxes; and even by that action, they did not escape the possibility of criminal prosecution being brought against them.

A significant fact was that the citizens generally of New Orleans, who, by the way, had always voted their town wet, were delighted to know that the law was stronger than the brewers. The newspapers, in the main, took the side of "law and order"; everyone seemed to feel that, while he had been laughing at Prohibition, some one had tried to cheat him.

Plenty of us are drinking in America. Many of us who are "dry" at home turn "wet" when we go a-visiting. Many of us have liquor in our homes because we think it is smart. It is estimated that the liquor bill of the United States for the year will be half a billion dollars. Not more than a million men will join together and spend this sum. But the liquor bill of England, for that same period, will be about four times that amount. And the candy bill of the United States will be about the same as its liquor bill. When candy and booze run about even in sales, it cannot be denied that we are not really drinking in the United States. Every European who comes here finds our streets free of drunkenness and empty of saloons. Now and then they come across liquor that has been smuggled in by way of Florida or the Gulf Stream, or

Canada or Mexico, but they wonder at the low visibility of the United States when it comes to searching for liquor.

We are not drinking—really. In England over \$40 apiece, for every man woman and child—twice England's meat bill—will go for alcohol; there's nothing like that in the United States these days. But we are doing a worse thing than over-drinking; a more dangerous thing—some one has got us to laughing at our own laws. Just now it happens to be the law against traffic in liquor. Tomorrow what law will some one get us to laugh at?

Millions of us in the United States have stopped drinking. When we could no longer get at the corner saloon, we ceased to drink. Even if we spend half a billion dollars this year for alcohol, against the two and a half billions which we have, on occasion, spent in a single year, the half-billion will buy comparatively so little high-priced liquor that no one can say that our Prohibition laws are a failure.

Their real test is under way at this minute—at this time when all of us, wet and dry, are laughing at them. Judges, here and there, are interpreting them to suit the desires of certain Americans for home and table drinking. Other judges are interpreting them to suit bootleggers and bankers who lend money to bootleggers. They are being mauled on the anvil of judicial benches, and the Prohibition law of today, as it is now interpreted, will not be the Prohibition law of ten years from now. Make sure of that! Somebody will be drinking alcohol in the United States a decade from now. Whether it will be all of us or only a few of us depends, at this very moment, on how the everyday man in the United States—the man who wanted his home dry and was willing to go dry himself—regards the Prohibition law and its enforcement. Judges may interpret its horns off, but he can laugh it to pieces.

Even more surprising become the facts of Prohibition enforcement as told by Mr. Shepherd in his second article in January COSMOPOLITAN. He tells not only who is drinking but also where and how they get it. There is no one in this country who isn't interested in this subject and here you will get it first-hand. Mr. Shepherd has toured the country for COSMOPOLITAN; he has hobnobbed with bootleggers everywhere. With officers of the law. We believe that this series is the first accurate analysis of Prohibition enforcement published. At the same time it reads like the most thrilling of adventure stories.

The Breath of Scandal

(Continued from page 21)

not weak. She'll never forgive me, if I don't let her know in time to reach the hospital—soon."

"That's right, dear Marjorie! That's right!" Billy approved, sympathetically, patting her. "You ought to have your mother now!"

"I'd no idea father was hurt anything like this," Marjorie continued, staring up at Billy and then at Gregg, "when the call came as it did. Just to Dr. Grant-ham, I mean. You see, if father was hurt anything like this, I'd have thought anybody would have called home too; right away."

"Probably it didn't seem so serious, at first," Gregg suggested. "No; probably not. I didn't ask Mr. Russell. I didn't ask him at all." She turned about.

"Where is Mr. Russell?" Billy demanded.

Gregg moved nearer Marjorie; he could feel the flimsy defense, which he had tried to build about her, beginning already to fall to pieces. He had not thought of Billy knowing Grantham's assistant; now it was plain that Billy did.

"I don't know," Gregg said as evenly as he could.

"Where's Mrs. Russell?" Billy demanded.

Yet he suspected nothing; Billy merely meant to take upon himself the direction of affairs here which, he felt, Gregg had been bungling.

"In her room, I suppose," Gregg said; for she had disappeared; and Gregg was thankful for that. "It was a frightful shock to

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her, of course, to have this happen here; she's done up. Probably her husband is with her—if he hasn't gone out for something."

For now Gregg considered that, though he had said that Russell had been in the flat, he had not said that the man with Grantham was Russell; Grantham had made no introductions when Marjorie came in to look upon her father; and Marjorie was accepting everything she found without question. Billy was not yet suspicious; but his determination to take matters into his own hands was sure to uncover everything.

"Bill," Gregg said quickly, as Marjorie went back into the hall, "come here a minute!"

"Why? I want to talk to Russell or his wife."

Gregg did not argue; he jerked Billy back into the living room. There was a sun parlor with glass doors in front and Gregg opened one of these and pulled Billy into the little room with him. As he shut the glass door, he saw through it that Marjorie apparently had forgotten her question for Mr. Russell; apparently, she had not noticed that Billy and Gregg had left her; he could see her standing outside the door of the room where her father lay; she was looking in. No wonder she forgot everything else.

"Gregg," said Billy, "what in the devil—"

"Bill," said Gregg, turning about. "There isn't any Mr. Russell to this flat! Do you get it now? Do you see?"

"What?"
There was no light in the sun parlor but that which came through the glass from the living room lamps and a little which streaked up from the street so, even if Marjorie had turned about, she could not see Billy's face now. And she did not turn. So Gregg was able to appeal:

"For God's sake, Bill, keep your voice down, and keep yourself together! Mr. Hale paid the rent on this place; there was no one here but Mrs. Russell. I mean, Bill, usually there wasn't. Tonight Russell—he used to be her husband, but they got divorced—came here and shot Mr. Hale! That's what's happened, Bill! Grantham knows it all, of course; and Carson—oh for God's sake! Bill! Bill, if you care a damn for Marjorie, pull up! Oh, old fellow, I tried not to hand it to you like this! But you had to get it or she would! Don't you see? We've all got to pull together on this or—" But Bill no longer was hearing.

"You're a liar!" he said, his big powerful hands clenched on Gregg's shoulders. "You admit to me now you're a liar."

"I got up that burglar story to keep it from Marjorie, Bill! don't you see? I tried to pass Carson off as Russell; but I couldn't pass him off on you."

Yet Billy still held his grip and could not believe.

"Bill, get Grantham out of that room—and away from Marjorie," Gregg suggested then. "Ask him what happened."

That forced Billy to believe or go to Grantham; and, faced this way, Billy had to concede to himself his belief. He tore his hands away.

"Oh, Gregg, Gregg!"

"All right, Bill! It had to hit you that way! Wouldn't give a damn for you if it didn't!"

"It's not me, Gregg. It's Marjorie! Oh, Gregg, the poor little girl. Let me go to her! Let me by!"

"No, Bill; not now! Go outdoors; you walk around outside for a while."

"You let me out of here now!"

"It's for Marjorie, Bill; we have to stick together; keep it from her; get her out of here before she suspects. So don't you go to her now; don't try to say a word to her. Go outdoors only till the ambulance comes; then we'll all be out of here."

"I'm all right now."

"Not yet, Bill!"

But Bill was able to take Gregg's hand from the door; and Gregg was unable to oppose him too violently for Marjorie returned to the living room. "Billy!" she cried, looking about confusedly.

He opened the door and stepped to her and Gregg gazed into the street and prayed for the ambulance. No moving car was in sight either way on the street but he stood with his back to the lighted room where Billy now had Marjorie in his arms, kissing her and reassuring her.

When Gregg heard some one else come, he turned about and saw Mrs. Russell and he stepped quickly into the living room. Evidently she had been bathing her eyes and otherwise composing herself and now had appeared to try to play the part before Marjorie Hale which Gregg had assigned to her. Why hadn't she stayed in her room? Gregg agonized when he saw her. Yet she appeared decent enough as she came forward calmly; too decent. That was the trouble. She made no move of her own to go to Marjorie, but Marjorie, desperately needing another woman just then, started to go to her; and Gregg, realizing it, jerked forward. Probably—as he afterwards thought—he would not have done what Billy did. For Bill reached forward as though catching Marjorie back from the furnace of hell itself. "Don't touch her!" he blurted.

"What?" Marjorie cried, more frightened. "Why? What's she done?" Marjorie stared from Billy to Sybil Russell and back to Billy again. He then could give no explanation and it was just as well that he tried none, if it was any better for Marjorie to remain in ignorance for an extra minute or so. Idea of the truth could not seize her yet, though this now further excited and roused her.

The woman's writing desk stood at the wall on Marjorie's right; the top was closed and nothing was upon it. Marjorie rested her hand on it when Billy released her and she looked again at Mrs. Russell. Then Gregg, watching, saw Mrs. Russell's eyes following Marjorie's hand; almost instantly Mrs. Russell lifted her glance, but Marjorie seemed to have realized Mrs. Russell's dread. Marjorie stared about and looked down and suddenly flung open the desk, gazed down and saw in a silver frame a picture of her father. She snatched it up; dropped it. A letter lay on one side; letters in handwriting she instantly recognized. She snatched up a letter, held it, crumpled it, dropped it and looked up.

Mrs. Russell was gone.

"Oh, Marjorie! Marjorie!" Billy cried and tried again to gather her in his arms. But she caught his big wrists in her little hands and with a strength that amazed him, she thrust him back from her; so he soon understood and made no more attempt.

"Gregg!" she faced about then, head up and calm. "Who shot father here? Why?"

"Russell," said Gregg. "He tried to blackmail, I think, Marjorie. He wasn't Mrs. Russell's husband. He only used to be." Gregg did not try to make it plainer; and there was no use trying to make it less cruel. Marjorie had it, whatever he said.

Once her hands clenched. "Where is he now? Not—not here?"

"No," said Gregg.

She did not follow thought of Russell for more than that flash. Her hands relaxed; slowly she swung her back to Gregg and Billy and stared at the hallway down which was the room where her father lay. Once she shrank shorter in a spasm; her tension had broken at her knees; but she caught up and regained herself and not even Billy this time tried to grasp her.

She made not a move, not a quiver, not a gasp for pity; but Gregg, watching her, was sorer for her than he had ever been for anyone in all his life; and prouder for her. He could not know then how he loved her; love—it was hardly a thing to think about then. But he seemed to feel something, fluid before, take form hard and unyielding with him; and he knew that he and his life were, that girl's. Then he looked up and saw Bill; but Bill did not see him.

Marjorie was turning about to them.

"Billy," she said, and then she looked by him to Gregg and though she did not say his name yet it was to him she spoke, "I don't know what's coming over me. I'm all right now. Don't either of you worry. You see I don't feel at all; I don't feel anything at all. Why, a minute ago I thought the worst thing in the world would be that my father would die. And now, I can't care!"

Billy breathed out, then caught his breath with a sob.

"Marjorie!"

"Don't, Billy," she begged. "I want to think; I have to think! The police for one thing; I was wondering a minute ago when they would come; I was going to ask if anyone had sent for them. Of course nobody did. We can't send for them now; we never can. Mother and father himself; his mother—everybody, we've got to think of them! Why, wasn't it funny! I almost telephoned mother a minute ago, from here. I see that won't do now; but we have to send some word home, Gregg; what am I going to say?"

V

GREGG turned away and walked to the window in an effort to think quickly and clearly; but he did not succeed well. "I don't know yet; we haven't got to say it yet, Marjorie. When we have to, you'd better not depend on me," Gregg admitted when he turned back. "I've bungled about everything tonight; but we won't muddle this along any further. Before we say anything now, we have to think of more than your mother and your own people; we have to figure out something that will stick with business men—with men like Mr. Stanway, especially, and with the newspapers, maybe, and with the police. I don't fool myself that I'm competent to get that up; Bill's not; you can't, Marjorie. Whoever does it has to be able to think of a thousand



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things that can't possibly come into our minds now. He has to have experience and he's got to be an expert. And there are experts in these things with lots of experience. That's why more things like this never come out; that's why this won't come out. Bill, you're a lawyer; and it's a lawyer who fixes everything. Who's the best man in Chicago to fix this?"

"Best man?" Billy parroted, dazed.

"He means the worst man in Chicago, Billy," Marjorie explained, compassionately almost as though it were Billy, not she, who was suffering. "He means who's the lowest lawyer you know, Billy; or the lowest you've heard of? For you wouldn't know the sort of man we need, Billy; thank Heaven!"

"Lowest?" Billy parroted again.

"That's what we mean, isn't it, Gregg?" Marjorie appealed.

Gregg had no course but to accept. "He mustn't sell out his side, Bill. That fellow who got Leverell out of that mix-up that the papers dropped all of a sudden last fall, Bill; what was his name?"

"Felix Rinderfeld."

"That's the man!"

"Good God!" Billy whispered to himself. It seemed as if he had not been able quite to grasp what Marjorie and he were involved in until Gregg connected with them Rinderfeld.

"Do you know anybody better, Bill?"

That buzzer from the front door, which Billy and Marjorie had sounded so long, vibrated again but only for an instant and gently. Gregg stepped back into the sun parlor and saw on the street a long, white-topped motor car.

"The ambulance is here," he announced quietly. "Go down, Bill, and let the men in; stretcher, of course, tell them."

Billy obeyed, relieved at something to do; Marjorie became whiter as her thought returned wholly to the physical condition of her father. She went into the bedroom and Grantham and Carson came out.

"Any change, doctor?" Gregg asked.

"No."

"Where's that car from, sir?"

"I called Fursten; he's a private firm."

"You're not taking Mr. Hale to St. Luke's, are you?"

"No."

"Where to, sir?"

"Mowbry, before Charles Hale lost consciousness he told that woman to send for me; he left word for me to do everything possible to protect his family, whether I found him alive or dead. So I'm taking him to Fursten's sanitarium. It's much nearer than St. Luke's." Grantham named the street and number. "There's a good operating room there; and good care. He'll have as much chance for his life there as anywhere; and no questions asked, Mowbry, if I'm able to pull him through. If I don't, of course the State's got to find out what happened. We're taking a chance but—"

The doctor halted; Gregg nodded. "I see, sir. You know, of course, that Marjorie found out."

"Yes."

"There's a lawyer named Rinderfeld who sees through things like this, doctor; fixes up the public explanation and all that, sir. I'm going to talk to him; he'll want to get in touch with you. You'll know now who he is."

"I think I've heard of him," Grantham

acknowledged. He moved back into the bedroom as Billy appeared at the entrance door with the attendants from the ambulance; Grantham sent out Marjorie and after a minute the men carried out her father. Grantham led the way downstairs and Marjorie and Billy followed. Gregg went as far as the top of the stairs where he heard Grantham explaining to the tenants of the first apartment—whose door had again opened—that Mrs. Russell's brother had suffered a "stroke" and was being taken to a hospital. From the front sun parlor, Gregg observed the stretcher put into the ambulance and he saw Marjorie and Grantham enter to ride in it; Billy and Carson got into Grantham's car. A few people had gathered to watch but they seemed to Gregg idly curious. If they asked any questions, they evidently were satisfied that the ambulance was removing a man suddenly taken sick. The white car drove off and the doctor's black one followed.

"That's cleared," Gregg murmured to himself with great relief; but he let himself relax for only a moment before he stepped to the closed door of Mrs. Russell's room and rapped.

"Where is the telephone?" he asked.

She let him in and showed him the instrument.

There was only one Rinderfeld listed in the directory; his name was Felix and he had both an office in the loop and a residence number on the South Side. Gregg called up the latter and when Rinderfeld answered, Gregg ascertained that he was the attorney who had handled the Leverell matter so Gregg gave him his name and said:

"I wish to retain you on a case which has just come up."

"All right; when do you come to see me?"

"I would like to have you come here," Gregg said; and gave the directions. He left the room and went back through the apartment which was all quiet now. He locked the rear door where he had broken the glass and he removed the key; entering the disordered room where Mr. Hale had lain, he swiftly stripped the bed and bundled the linen in a corner. He went forward and ascertained that no one was loitering in front of the building.

After he had delayed for a few minutes in the living room, Mrs. Russell came in.

"Where have they taken—Mr. Hale?" she questioned quietly.

Gregg told her.

She gazed at him, considerably, and then she asked: "Why are you waiting here?"

"I've sent for a lawyer named Rinderfeld; he'll be here in about an hour. You must tell him everything that happened here; and I think you had better tell him anything else he wants to know."

"Why?"

"He handles situations like this," Gregg explained shortly. "He'll know the best thing for us all to do."

"Oh! Then we're to—act together."

"Of course."

Gregg dropped into a chair near the front window where he could overlook the street. She took place on the piano bench on the opposite side of the room and Gregg put her out of his mind after a moment; he half turned his back to her and, bending down, he gazed toward the gay, new tall residence-hotels and two-room apartment structures which appeared partly

by light etched rising Gregg here modern rapidly in who bothered lation to repla tion in a simp respons was re coming fashion ideals at all c posed i merely ual as nothing force h in this been sh had ha "it," s aversion in such to his boy. had hu Yet number who w was Ny The str did no wholly each of Russell how or did not It wa him fro accusa had flu she hac piano h Hale h other y Marjor escape had dr For to —the y of this for her, Gregg restless hall, st father self an hypocri self wa tonight never would f as this; on abou For he to ente but to sible to "Go mutter have of He Mrs. R frighter absent

by lights from their windows, partly etched in dim outline against the glare rising from the streets before them. In Gregg's mind, previously, the life about here had represented to him, vaguely, a modern stage of personal relationships, rapidly replacing the more familiar sort in which he had grown up. He had never bothered in his mind about so silly a speculation as to whether this stage "ought" to replace the other; his brain did not function in such useless ways. He observed as a simple, obvious fact that the easy, irresponsible-appearing way of living, which was represented by this district, was becoming more and more popular; the old-fashioned "home" with sober duties and ideals was amazingly less so, if he thought at all of the transition stage, he had supposed it to be easy enough and natural—merely a matter of choice for any individual as to how he preferred to live. For nothing had ever happened to Gregg to force him to feel anything else. But here, in this room where Marjorie's father had been shot and where a few minutes ago he had had to stand by and watch her learn "it," suddenly he revolted with savage aversion to these great indulgent buildings in such opposition to Marjorie's home and to his own, where he had been happy as a boy. He hated these places because they had hurt him and had hurt Marjorie so.

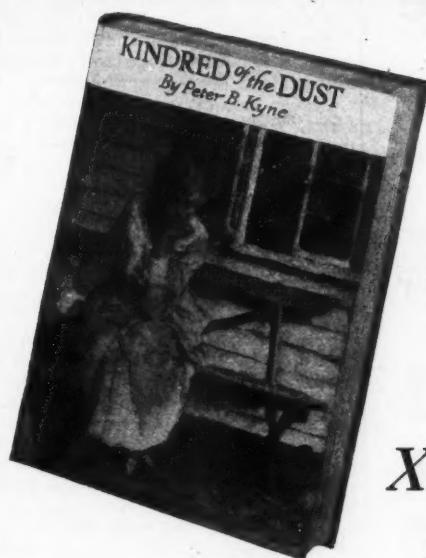
Yet he was aware that, in the great number of these rooms about, lived people who were married; right next door here was Nyman with his wife and their baby. The strange circumstance was that Gregg did not distinguish such neighbors as wholly different, in their relationship with each other, from Charles Hale and Sybil Russell. Gregg could not then figure out how or why; the simple fact was that he did not feel it.

It was partly this, perhaps, which held him from casting upon Sybil Russell that accusation of personal infamy which Billy had flung upon her. He thought that if she had never existed, in her place on that piano bench near the spot where Charles Hale had been shot, would be sitting some other young woman who represented to Marjorie's father the passion and the escape from duty and responsibilities which had drawn Charles Hale to this place. For to have his share in the life about here—the young, new, reckless independence of this district—rather than particularly for her, Charles Hale had come here.

Gregg sat back and straightened and, restlessly, he arose and strode down the hall, thinking. Not about Marjorie's father and Mrs. Russell; but about himself and Marjorie. For Gregg was no hypocrite and what he thought within himself was that if he married Marjorie, as tonight he had longed to in a way he had never desired anything else before, he would take her to some such neighborhood as this; some such life, as that which went on about here, would become hers and his. For he wanted her to live with him, not to enter upon duties and responsibilities, but to escape such things as far as possible to her and to himself.

"Good thing Bill's got you," Gregg muttered to himself. "Good thing you have old Bill. Oh, damn, damn."

He returned to the living room where Mrs. Russell, left alone, had become more frightened and was standing and staring absently about.



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MR. C. E. BROOKS

"They must have reached the hospital by this time!" she cried to Gregg.

"Yes; probably."

She started past him and he caught her wrist. "Don't telephone there; don't send any call from here to anywhere!"

For an instant she flared up, defying him: "You shall not tell me what I may do! I am going to know what is happening to him! He's mine! I—I love him, you—boy! Do you think that I—"

"I don't think at all," Gregg stopped her calmly and firmly, "about you and him. That's not my affair. But other people are. We will hear if anything more happens. You'd better sit down there again, hadn't you?"

She had good sense, Gregg noticed; indeed, it was extraordinary how well she controlled herself, how little of the irresponsible she had indulged in. Now that he took time to observe her, he found her distinctly a person of marked individualities. His first impression of her as a woman lacking in the weakness and pliability which might be presumed of one in her situation had progressed to perception of more definite qualities of will and self-reliance than he often saw in women. Not for money, Gregg was sure, had she chosen to do what she had done. She had said she loved Charles; but, as Gregg went on talking with her, as impersonally as possible about what the doctors had discovered and about Mr. Hale's chances for recovery, she offered none of the usual, stale, socialistic "free love" excuse or arguments for her way of living. Gregg was rather relieved at that; they always made him disgusted; at least the sort of people who put them forth always were to him a disgusting lot. This woman, whatever she was, had nothing to do with that lot. Her way of living asked for no approval of others; it was her own for reasons sufficient to herself and she did not trouble to defend or explain it further than to mention that she was downtown, regularly, on business days; for she was a life insurance agent. Then, forming a sudden decision, she made her sole direct reference to her life at the flat:

"Charles Hale and I split expenses here and everywhere; he paid his; I paid mine. Fifty-fifty. That's the one fact I care to have you, and members of his family, know. We went fifty-fifty from the first. I made seven thousand dollars of my own last year. Do you believe me?"

"Of course I do," said Gregg.

A few minutes after that—it was almost midnight—Felix Rinderfeld appeared.

His arrival was by means of a new "town car" which either was a Rolls-Royce or so perfect a copy that the difference was not distinguishable from the third floor sunparlor. Rinderfeld proved to be a young man, evidently not five years older than Gregg. As his name suggested, he was a Jew and he was of the type that keeps himself, while young, in vigorous physical condition; a man of medium height and ordinary proportions, he had cultivated an emphatic self-confidence of bearing sufficient to make most people describe him as having "presence." Gregg recognized him at once as a man who, without doing anything actually unmannerly, yet made it a custom to be conspicuous about such places as the Blackstone and the Drake; once, Gregg remembered, he had almost asked a waiter who the fellow was.

He was not embarrassed in the slightest about his business nor did he expect his clients to be about theirs. In fact, he entered as though he had dropped in upon personal friends for a casual midnight chat and was in no hurry to get to business. Gregg was. He informed Rinderfeld carefully of Charles Hale's position in respect to his family and also went into what details he could concerning Hale's situation in Tri-State, his recent rapid promotions and the opposition of Stanway; he related the facts which Marjorie knew and how Dr. Grantham had taken Hale with Marjorie and Whittaker to Fursten's. Rinderfeld seemed to approve heartily of Fursten's. Gregg submitted himself to the several questions which Rinderfeld put; then Gregg left the room while Rinderfeld talked with Mrs. Russell.

It was nearly an hour before the final cessation of murmurs told Gregg that Rinderfeld had obtained from Mrs. Russell the information he needed and he stepped into the dining room where Gregg was waiting.

"All set now," announced Rinderfeld, reassuringly. "Of course, two elements in this are temporarily out of control. First, what George Russell may do. If the fool gets overcome with fright and gives himself up to the police, we'll have a somewhat difficult situation. But she doesn't think he'll do that. However, I'm going to have him found. Second, is Hale going to die? I'll take that in hand myself now. I'm going to Fursten's."

"What's the best thing for me to do now?" Gregg asked.

"Go home," Rinderfeld supplied promptly; and he made a note of Gregg's address and telephone number. "After I've had a look about Fursten's, I'll send word if I've need for you."

He thrust forward his hand and, with more reluctance than Gregg could recall feeling at such a formality, Gregg shook hands. Together they said good night to Mrs. Russell, who plainly already had her instructions.

In his car, Gregg followed the shining coupé of Rinderfeld into Sheridan Road and down the boulevard to the street for Fursten's. When the lawyer made the turn, it was not recollection of his instruction which kept Gregg from turning after him; what held Gregg straight on the way to Pearson Street was thought of Marjorie and Billy together at the hospital; together as they ought to be; upon them he now had no reason nor right to intrude.

He put up his car and ascended to his apartment, which was deserted at this hour; for Dora, the maid, was the daughter of the woman who cooked in the apartment below and she shared her mother's room on the lower floor. Gregg went into Billy's room to make sure that Bill had not returned; then, restlessly, he strolled through the empty rooms. He opened a bottle of whisky and took a drink; he put a band record on the phonograph and played it over and over, while he sat stretched out in a morris chair before it. A little after two o'clock, he turned out the lights and shut himself in his own room where he lay on his bed without undressing. He could not drive off memory of what he had witnessed this night; and now he was not trying to. For his mind had ceased to give him again and again

only the vision of that apartment on Clearedge Street; of Charles Hale lying like dead with the doctors bending over him; of Marjorie taking up her father's picture and dropping it and looking from Billy to him and learning. His visions were beginning to go back a little to Mr. Hale greeting his guests at the wide door of his home; to the dinner table with Mr. Hale at one end, all friendly and easy, and his wife at the other as she had been. And her voice seemed to come to Gregg again as, deliberately and merely as a matter of fact, she related incidents of her last stay abroad and as she went on to her plans for returning to Brittany for several months . . . "with my daughter this time, I hope. It is too bad Mr. Hale's business never permits him to do more than take me across the ocean."

Gregg clenched his fists in a queer instinctive spasm. He sat up. A few minutes later, he heard Bill's key in the front door. Evidently Bill hung up his coat and stood in the hall while he talked to himself: "You wouldn't say it could happen! You wouldn't . . ."

Billy trod heavily to his room where he moved about, talking to himself. Gregg got up and opened the door from the bathroom into Billy's.

"How's Mr. Hale, Bill?"

Billy had been undressing while he walked about; he had his coat and waistcoat off and his collar in his hand when he turned. If Gregg had not known that Billy never drank, he must have supposed him drunk from the redness of his face and of his blood-shot eyes.

"Oh! You here, Gregg?" He did not add verbally but he might as well have said that he had forgotten all about Gregg. "We took Mr. Hale to a hospital, Gregg. A private one; Fursten's."

"Yes," said Gregg. "I know. I saw you start; what happened when you got there?"

"Oh, Dr. Grantham operated. It was successful, they think. They got the bullet. Probably Mr. Hale will live."

"That's good," said Gregg.

"Good?" Billy repeated. "I suppose so. Poor Marjorie! and Mrs. Hale, Gregg!"

"Oh, what about her, Bill? What have you told her? You took Marjorie home, of course."

Billy stared absently at Gregg and then nodded. "She was in her room, Mrs. Hale was; gone to bed but awake. She hadn't expected Marjorie earlier. We passed the club on the way; people were still dancing."

"Then Marjorie didn't see her mother?"

"Just called good night to her and she went to her room, Marjorie did. I waited downstairs; I heard her."

"I see. Then you decided to tell her nothing tonight. Rinderfeld wanted that?"

At recollection of Rinderfeld, Billy jerked up, bristling with disgust.

"You talked to Rinderfeld, Gregg?"

"Certainly. I stayed at Clearedge Street till after he got through talking to Mrs. Russell; then I sent him after you to Fursten's."

"He talked to Marjorie there, Gregg. He took her off by herself and told her what she had to do; Rinderfeld!" Billy repeated, as though hardly able to bear the remembrance.

"Of course," Gregg accepted calmly. "That's what we hired him for. What did he tell her?"

"Not to say anything tonight, if we didn't have to."

"Then how about tomorrow?"

Billy started to reply and then went to his coat from a pocket of which he extracted a sheet of paper covered with distinct, black handwriting. "He wrote this out for you and me."

Gregg took it and read, in the legible flourishes which at each line recalled Felix Rinderfeld, these concise, practical instructions:

"For William Whittaker and Gregg Mowbry.

"Up to the occasion of the telephone call which reached Marjorie Hale and originated in Dr. Grantham's office, there is no need to correct your recollections.

"The occasion of the call was this: for many weeks Mr. Charles Hale had been aware of a soreness in his left side. Having consulted Dr. Grantham, he learned that there existed a pathological condition which might of itself subside but which might, on the other hand, suddenly become acute and endanger his life. He concealed this knowledge not only from his family but from his friends and business associates.

"His errand in the city last night, before the time he intended to take the train, was to consult Dr. Grantham, who examined him, discovered to his alarm that the condition had suddenly become acute and that an immediate and radical operation was necessary. Mr. Hale objected to this, wishing to avoid prolonged absence from his office at this difficult time; but upon Dr. Grantham pointing out that his life was in danger, he agreed to undergo an operation, provided the nature of it be kept secret. He believed that if it became known that a radical operation was performed the directors of the Tri-State Corporation might be led to think that his health was permanently impaired; this presumption would be unjustifiable but, considering the internal situation of the corporation, Mr. Hale believed that it would seriously affect his prospects for promotion to Mr. Dorsett's position. Therefore Mr. Hale arranged that Dr. Grantham operate in a small, private hospital and, during the period of his convalescence, he would give out that he was ill at home from an ordinary infection of influenza.

"Dr. Grantham therefore took him to Fursten's, instructing his girl to communicate with Mrs. Hale; she telephoned to the Hale home, was informed that Mrs. Hale was at the club where Mrs. Lovell was giving a dance; and Dr. Grantham's girl called there, not finding Mrs. Hale, but Miss Hale, who with the advice of William Whittaker and Gregg Mowbry decided to spare Mrs. Hale anxiety and not inform her until the operation was performed.

"Miss Hale and William Whittaker and Mowbry immediately left for Fursten's and Miss Hale and Whittaker were present while the operation was performed; this was successful and Whittaker took Miss Hale to her home.

"The above constitute the essential facts. Comment; it is not expected that the belief that Mr. Hale is ill at home with influenza can be successfully maintained. However, this will be originally stated with



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the expectation that, sooner or later, others will discover he has been in a city hospital for a surgical operation. The "truth" as above outlined will then be reluctantly admitted; that will be found to satisfy everyone and nothing more damaging will be suspected."

Gregg looked up as Billy came beside him impatiently and broke out again: "Good God, how could a man do a thing like that? How could he . . . could he?"

Gregg could endure no more emotion. "Like this?" he said, brandishing Rinderfeld's paper. "This is Rinderfeld's business, Bill. He does it all the time; and he's done us a good job, I'd say. That double lie alone is worth his price—whatever he charges for it. Giving the neighbors something to find out and to satisfy them when they've got it; now you and I, Bill, never would have figured out that. It's got to come from experience."

Billy stared, not hearing. "I mean Mr. Hale, Gregg! How could he do a thing like that?"

"Oh," Gregg said, as though recollecting, "Mr. Hale was up against something, Bill! He had about three things he could do; one and two others. I suppose maybe he tried the first for a while and then got tired sticking it or—something made him mad, maybe. That left him the choice of the other two; and I suppose he chose the one which he figured showed more consideration to his wife."

Billy gaped. "What did you say?" Gregg repeated it; but Billy continued to stare as though Gregg had gone mad. "Why, Gregg!"

"That's all right and I'm all right, too," Gregg assured. "I'm going to get some sleep now. You'd better make a stab at it, too. G'night, Bill. I forgot one thing. I'm glad, Bill."

"Glad? You are crazy, then?" "About Marjorie and you, old fellow." "Oh!"

"Night, Bill." Then Gregg withdrew and, returning to his own room, for the first time he locked his door against Bill; for he knew that pretty soon Bill was coming to demand an explanation; and he didn't care to talk or have to think any

more before he had a sleep. For he held no illusions that he was not in for an adventure which, sooner or later, was bound to try him out with himself and force him to find out what he was and, also, what he might be. Gregg's philosophy had never contemplated any such stirring up.

He reread the clear, succinct narrative of events which Rinderfeld had supplied Billy—a simple enough and a straightforward seeming story and one which, so far as Gregg could now discern, covered all probable contingencies. It was a good piece of work for Rinderfeld and, for its very simplicity, far better than Gregg or Billy or any other amateur in such affairs could have composed. But it could not be proof against every attack; indeed, at any moment a circumstance might become public which would scrap the whole careful scheme and thrust the truth into the open.

Well, suppose it did? Gregg, in his exhaustion of feeling, scarcely cared; for him, the calamity which he feared and which he had set himself to prevent, had happened. Marjorie knew; and the addition of public dishonor could hardly score her more. He thought of her as he had last seen her, stupefied, still mercifully unable to feel the full effect of the blow which had struck her. But soon she must commence to feel; and when she would, Gregg longed to be with her. But he knew that he could not be; that would be Billy's right.

Gregg lay down and tried to summon sleep. He could not let himself think of her turning to Bill for help in these next days before her. What sort of help could Bill give; how could he aid her to understand? No use bothering about that; Bill would be the one with her through these next days and the result of them upon her probably would determine whether she was to become hard, disillusioned and reckless and do the wild, unforeseeable things which Marjorie Hale might do or whether she would emerge from it all, the Marjorie that Gregg dreamed she might be. Well, no use thinking about that; none of his business anyway; she was Bill's and with Bill she must become what Bill and she would determine.

It is not possible for Marjorie to keep herself from being dragged deeper and deeper into the mire of intrigue, both business and personal, that surrounds her father. Now that she has gone as far as she has, she must keep on going. She can't stop. And so it is that in the next instalment of "The Breath of Scandal" you find her face to face with another desperate situation. Fate seems to have selected her for its victim, rather than her father. Now you begin to get the full force of this really vital novel of American family life—one that we believe will make America think.

The Fish

(Continued from page 38)

been meditating earnestly upon the photograph question. Of course he had many photographs of himself, but he dreamed of new ones which should dazzle the beholder. As to interviews, he would grant them, but only in his dressing room until Gladiola had discovered a desirable abode.

By this time he had adopted, instinctively and honestly, a sort of amiably fatigued attitude towards the world. You could not keep people off; they simply would not leave you alone; therefore you must let them come on. And also he had

grown critical of the evening's applause. If it was not up to the high-water mark, he would say to his dresser, "Not a hand tonight," or, "Stodgy lot tonight," or, "I can't think what's the matter with 'em"—when everybody knew that the applause was still extremely generous.

He entered Emily's drawing room with a magnificent assurance, which was somewhat wasted for the reason that she was not there. A very luxurious room—and the lift porter had style—but he would attain to a drawing room just as good, and before

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long too! He was not particularly curious about Emily's purposes in regard to him. Since the feverish scene in her dressing room she had displayed no further symptom whatever of a disordered temperament. On the stage with him she was most helpful and businesslike. Well, you could not understand women; nobody could; and there you were! That she still admired him he did not doubt. Anyhow she could not dispute that he got quite as much applause as she did.

She came in, wearing a rather plain afternoon dress and smiling a little sadly, and shook hands with her usual benevolent friendliness.

"So nice of you to come. Do sit down," she said. "Tea will be here in a moment."

Reginald sat rather awkwardly, and his awkwardness was increased as Emily, disposing herself elaborately on a sofa, gave no sign of undertaking the main burden of the conversation. Reginald, despite the enthusiasm of thousands who had paid money to see him disport himself in a drawing room with only three sides to it, could not make much of a figure in a drawing room with the usual number of walls. In particular he could not converse; and this vexed him and set him against those persons who forced him to see his own defect.

"How is your wife?" said the rich voice. "D'you know I'd got no idea you were married! What a nice devoted creature! Keep her, Reginald. Treat her with imagination. I trust you do. A wife like that is invaluable. You'll deceive her, of course. You must. She will expect it, for she knows by instinct that no woman can possibly hope to monopolize a man like you."

Reginald gave a foolish, constrained snigger.

"Oh, oh!"

"I'm quite serious," said Emily Flyfax. "I'm always serious about such matters. Few people are . . . Then your wife is young. She will be young for years yet. You don't know, but I know—youth is the greatest thing in the world. Don't I realize it!" She sighed.

Yet Reginald thought she was looking unusually young that afternoon. A maid brought in the tea and went out again, and Emily Flyfax made no movement.

"I wonder what she's up to this time," thought Reginald. He was incapable of comprehending that the ungovernably temperamental artiste was essaying new tactics, appealing to him in an entirely fresh way, feeling gently for his compassion instead of trying to carry him by assault. The grandeur of her despairing courage was lost on him as she stretched out an arm, seized a large early photograph of herself, offered it for his inspection, and murmured with a kind-of touching majesty:

"This is what I once was. Look at it." She gazed at him, as if saying: "Do not let me abase my present self too far. I am still a wondrous treasure of delights."

Reginald took the photograph and examined it.

"By the by," said he, interested. "Tell me—who are the best stage photographers in these days?"

She continued for a few instants to gaze at him after he had uttered these remarkable words, then rose slowly and left the room, not shutting the door. Reginald waited, calmly at first, for her return. Ten minutes passed like an hour. The tea was cooling. Should he pour out some tea

for himself? What could she be doing? Should he ring the bell and inquire about her? What was the correct worldly course in such a singular contretemps? Well, he dared not pour out the tea! He produced his beautiful gold cigarette case, regarded it, lit a cigarette, and resumed his waiting. He no more dared ring the bell than he dared pour out the tea. But something must be done. He was making up his mind to the extreme act of ringing the bell when the door opened wide and there entered Lady Queenie Paulle.

She was a lovely object, considerably younger than Emily Flyfax, astonishingly dressed—as though with the intention of combining all the style of the West with all the lure of the East. Her complexion was unique; but, though graceful in the serpentine manner, she had not the generous contours, nor the individual distinction, nor the tremendous force, nor the honest good nature of Emily. And her eye was hard, and her low voice not liquid.

"I've come to pour out your tea," she said, shaking hands. "And to apologize for poor Emily. Don't be afraid, my dear Reggie. I shan't attempt to kiss you." She sat down, calmly inspected the tea tray and poured out the tea, which was fatally stewed and almost cold, but which Reginald meekly drank.

"Is Miss Flyfax unwell?" he asked.

"Not at all," Lady Queenie smiled. "Emily is never unwell, whereas I'm never well. I ought to explain to you, Reggie, that Em and I really are the greatest friends. I've taken a flat in this block partly to be near her and partly to escape my noble but timid parents. Emily ran up to see me after she left you. She cried in my arms."

"Cried!" exclaimed Reginald.

Lady Queenie nodded mysteriously.

"All on account of you. Of course it was entirely her own fault. I may as well tell you the whole truth. I'd expect Em to do the same for me. Moreover, she asked me to. Besides, you know what perfect cats women are, don't you, darling? Emily is absurd. She has the most ridiculous illusions. She thinks that you owe your position at the Princess entirely to her, and that she quarreled with Jack Moy solely for your sake. She's incapable of seeing that you are a great actor with nothing to learn from her or anybody else, and that Cecil Frank would have jumped at you anyway. She won't admit that genius always comes to the top, especially on the stage."

"When she wants anything she wants it. She wanted you to be kind to her. She tried one way and then she tried another. She can't play with a man like I can—she's too honest. I'm not honest. Moreover, she was mad about you. Utterly mad. She always admitted it. It seems she took her heart out of her breast and offered it to you half an hour ago, and that in reply you asked her for the name of the best photographer. Well, you cured her. She did cry in my arms; but she laughed, too. I left her laughing and she was saying that she wondered how she could ever have thought you beautiful. The capricious creature is now convinced that you've got no chin, and your features aren't a bit regular, and you have a fatuous wistful expression that pleases silly women—which means nine women out of ten. These are her actual views, and she requested me to inform you about them. When I

pointed out that your feelings might be hurt she said that that was quite impossible because your feelings are so fully protected by your admirable and absolutely impenetrable self-conceit—which we all admire so much. Another cup, Reggie?”

Reginald remarked:

“I’m hanged if you aren’t both mad. I never heard such ravings.”

“We aren’t mad now,” said Lady Queenie. “We were.”

“Hang it! Can’t a fellow ask the name of a good photographer?” He left his chair.

“Not in aristocratic circles,” Lady Queenie answered. “It’s not done . . . Reggie!” She called him back as he was departing. “Don’t breathe a word of all this tonight, or there may be trouble. She didn’t really tell me to tell you. But I can never resist a new sensation, and so I told you.”

VII

It is a first night at Daly’s. The band is playing before the curtain. The celebrities are coming into the stalls and the experts in the pit are recognizing them, assessing them, and applauding them. Ministers of the crown are applauded; old actresses and young actresses are applauded; prize fighters are applauded; soldiers are applauded—all with discretion. Then outbursts a perfect roar of applause. It is for a still youngish man, with loose-jointed deportment, no chin worth mentioning, and a romantic, wistful, sympathy-demanding expression on his otherwise dull and fatuous face. The pit has identified Reginald Sark, hero of the M. O. S., or Mad-on-Sark Brigade of medaled young women.

He is able to attend the first night because he happens to be rehearsing a new piece. His photographs are in the windows of all the stationery shops. The illustrated papers never lose an opportunity of publishing them, and no mean part of his considerable income derives from the said photographs. The dramatic critics keep on saying year after year that he is leading to act and taking his art seriously. He is the most popular actor in London. He never appears, either on the stage or off, without receiving enthusiastic applause. But no paper ever mentions that a Mrs. Sark exists and that he is a faithful husband to her and the father of her five children. The Brigade is convinced that his life is a constant leaping from one adoration to another, and that he is marvelously sinful.

At the end of the first act, when he leaves the stalls to go behind, the pit furiously applauds. And when he returns the pit furiously applauds. At the end of the third act, when he leaves the stalls to get a drink, the pit furiously applauds, and when he returns the pit furiously applauds. The poor man cannot blow his nose without hand clapping. He regards the whole business as the most natural thing in the world.

“They will do it,” he says to himself. “Let them. After all there is nobody like me.” Ill-natured men in theatrical clubs say that his self-conceit is the Himalaya of self-conceits, that he has never in his life done anything but look wistful, and that the earth is a queer place. These cynics are unjust. It would have been impossible for Reginald, or anybody else, not to be acutely conceited in Reginald’s circumstances. He cannot help his face. He may not be an actor, but he is a model citizen.

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December Love

(Continued from page 64)

But now, standing by the fire, she knew that it would have been safer to have left him there. And it would be safer now to ring the bell, summon the footman, and say that she was not at home to anyone that afternoon. While she was thinking this the footman entered the room. Hearing him she turned sharply.

"What is it?"

"Sir Seymour Portman has called, my lady. I told him you were not at home. But he asked me to make quite sure."

Lady Sellingworth hesitated. After a moment's pause she said, in a dry voice:

"Not at home."

The footman went out.

There are moments in life which are full of revelation. That was such a moment for Lady Sellingworth. When she had heard the door open her instinct had played her false. She had turned sharply feeling certain that Craven had called. The reaction she felt when she heard the name of Sir Seymour told her definitely that she was in danger. She felt angry with herself, even disgusted, as well as half frightened. An acute sense of disappointment pervaded her because Craven had not come, though she had no reason whatever to expect him. But she was angry because of her feeling about Seymour Portman. It was horrible to have such a tepid heart as hers was when such a long and deep devotion was given to it. The accustomed thing then made

scarcely any impression upon her, while the thing that was new, untried, perhaps worth very little, excited in her an expectation which amounted almost to longing?

"How can Seymour go on loving such a woman as I am?" she thought.

Stretching herself a little she was able to look into an oval Venetian mirror above the high marble frame of the fireplace. She looked to scourge herself for a punishment for what she was feeling.

"You miserable ridiculous old woman!" she said to herself, as she saw her lined face which the mirror, an antique one, slightly distorted. "I am sixty. That settles it. There is nothing to be excited about, nothing to look for, nothing to draw back from or refuse. The fact that I am sixty and look as I do settles the whole matter."

They were brave words, but unfortunately they altered nothing. Feeling was untouched by them. Even conviction was not attained. Lady Sellingworth knew she was sixty, but she felt like a woman of thirty at that moment. And yet she was not deceived, was not deceiving herself. She did know that the curious spell she had evidently been able to exert upon Craven during his visit to her that night could not possibly be lasting.

Therefore surely the way was plain before her. Ten years ago, she had made up her mind, as a woman seldom makes up her mind. She had seen facts, basic facts,

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naked in a glare of light. Those facts had not changed. But she had changed. She was ten years older. The horror of passing into the fifties had died out in the cold resignation of passing into the sixties. Any folly now would be ten times more foolish than a folly of ten years ago. She told herself that, reiterated it.

The clock struck six. She heard it and turned from the fire. Certainly Craven would not call now. It was too late. Only a very intimate friend would be likely to call after six o'clock, and Craven was not a very intimate friend, but only a new acquaintance whom she had been with twice.

She had a lonely dinner, a lonely evening before her.

Suddenly all her resignation seemed to leave her, to abandon her, as if it had had enough of her and could not bear to be with her for another minute. She saw her life as a desert, without one flower, one growing green thing in it. How had she been able to endure it, for so long? It was a monstrous injustice that she should be condemned to this horrible, unnerving loneliness. What was the use of living if one was entirely alone? What was the use of money, of a great and beautiful house, of comfort and of leisure, if nobody shared them with you?

"What shall I do tonight? I can't stay here all alone. I must go out. I must do something unusual to take me out of myself. Mere stagnation here will drive me mad. I've got to do something to get away from myself."

But what could she do? An elderly, well-known woman cannot break out of her house in the night, like an unknown young man, and run wild in the streets of London, or wander in the parks, seeking distractions and adventures.

Ten years ago in Paris she had felt something of the same angry desire for the freedom of a man, something of the same impotence. Her curbed wildness then had tortured her. It tortured her now. Life was in violent activity all about her. Even the shop girls had something to look forward to. Soon they would be going out with their lovers. She knew something of the freedom of the modern girl. Women were beginning to take what men had always had. But all that freedom was too late for her! She forgot that she had taken it long ago in Paris and felt that she had never had it. And that feeling was part of her anger.

The clock struck the half hour.

Just then the door was opened and the footman appeared before she had had time to move. He looked faintly surprised at seeing her standing facing him in the middle of the room.

"Mr. Craven has called, my lady."

"Mr. Craven! But I told you to let him in. Have you sent him away?"

"No, my lady. But Mr. Craven wouldn't come up till I had seen your ladyship. He said it was so late. He asked me first to tell your ladyship he had called and whether he might see you just for a minute, as he had a message to give your ladyship."

"A message! Please ask him to come up."

The footman went out, and Lady Seltingworth went to sit down near the fire. She now looked exactly as usual, casual, indifferent but kind, not at all like a



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woman who would ever pity herself. In a moment Craven walked in with an eager but slightly anxious expression on his face. "I know it is much too late for a visit," he said. "But I thought I might perhaps just speak to you."

"Of course. I hear you have a message for me. Is it from Beryl?"

He looked surprised.

"Miss Van Tuyn? I haven't seen her."

"Yes?"

"I only wanted—I wondered whether, if you are not doing anything tonight, I could persuade you to give me a great pleasure . . . Could I?"

"But what is it?"

"Would you dine with me at the *Bella Napoli*?"

Lady Sellingworth thought of the shop girls again, but now how differently.

"I would come and call for you just before eight. It's a fine night. It's dry, and it will be clear and starry."

"You want me to walk!"

He slightly reddened.

"Or shall we dress and go in a taxi?" he said.

"No, no. But I haven't said I can come."

His face fell.

"I will come," she said. "And we will walk. But what would Mr. Braybrooke say?"

"Have you seen him? Has he told you?"

"What?"

"About our conversation in the club?"

"I have seen him and I don't think he is quite pleased about our walking home. But never mind. I cannot live to please Mr. Braybrooke. *Au revoir*. Just before eight."

When he had gone Lady Sellingworth again looked in the glass.

"But it's impossible!" she said to herself. "It's impossible!"

She hated her face at that moment, and could not help bitterly regretting the fierce impulse of ten years ago. If she had not yielded to that impulse she might now have been looking, not a young woman certainly, but a woman well preserved. Now she was frankly a wreck. She would surely look almost grotesque dining alone with young Craven. People would think she was his grandmother. Perhaps it would be better not to go. She was filled with a sense of painful hesitation. She came away from the glass.

She might communicate with Craven, tell him not to come, that she had changed her mind, did not feel very well. He would not believe her excuse whatever it was, but that could not be helped. Anything was better than to make a spectacle of herself in a restaurant. She had not put Craven's address and telephone number in her address book, but she might perhaps have kept the note he had written to her

before their first meeting. She went to her writing table, but could not find the note. She found his card but it had only his club address on it. Then she went downstairs to a morning room she had on the ground floor. There was another big writing table there. The telephone was there too. After searching for several minutes she discovered Craven's note, the only note he had ever written to her. Stamped in the left hand corner of the note paper was a telephone number.

She was about to take down the receiver when she remembered that Craven had not yet had time to walk back to his flat from her house, even if he were going

Lady Sellingworth did not take up a book, or occupy herself in any way. She just sat still in the arm chair and waited. And loneliness crept upon her like something gathering her into a cold and terrible embrace.

It occurred to her that she might ask Craven presently through the telephone to come and dine in Berkeley Square. No one would see her with him if she did that, except her own servants.

But that would be a compromise. She was not fond of compromises. Better one thing or the other. Either she would go with him to the restaurant or she would not see him at all that night.

Lady Sellingworth looked at her watch. Craven lived not far off. He might be at home by now. She got up and went to the telephone.

As she put her hand on the receiver, but before she took it down, Lady Sellingworth thought of the Paris railway station; of what had happened there, of the stern resolution she had come to that day, of the tears of blood that had sealed it, of the will that had enabled her to stick to it during ten years.

"I won't go!" she said to herself.

And she took the receiver down.

Almost immediately she was connected, and heard Craven's voice at the other end:

"Yes? Who is it?"

"Lady Sellingworth," she replied.

The sound of the voice changed at once, became eager.

"Oh—Lady Sellingworth! I have only just come in. I know what it is."

"But how can you?"

"I do. You want me to dress for dinner. And we are to go in a cab and be respectable instead of Bohemian. Isn't that it?"

She hesitated. Then she said:

"No, it isn't that."

"Do tell me then!"

"I'm afraid I can't come."

"Oh, no—it can't be that! But I have reserved the table in the corner for us. And we are going to have gnocchi done in a special way with cheese. Please—please don't disappoint me."

"But I haven't been very well the last two days and I'm rather afraid of the cold."

"I am so sorry. But it's absolutely dry underfoot. I swear it is!"

A pause. Then his voice added:

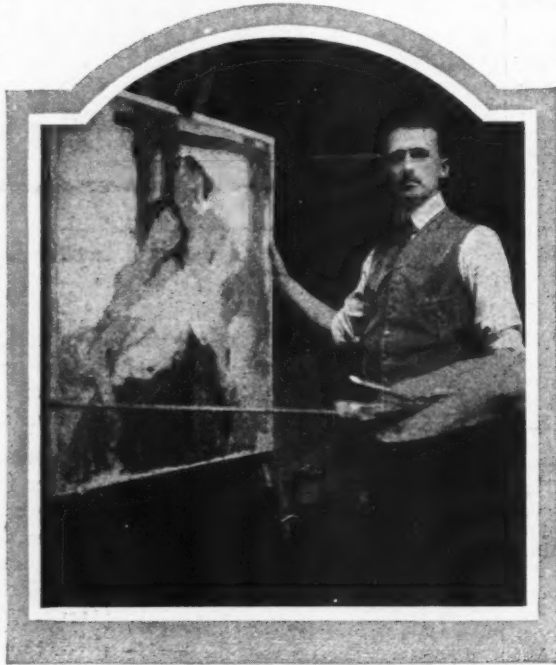
"Since I came in I have refused an invitation to dine out tonight. I absolutely relied on you."

"Yes—?"

"Yes. It was from Miss Van Tuyn to dine with her at the *Bella Napoli*."

"I'll come!" said Lady Sellingworth. "Good by."

And she put up the receiver.



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straight home. She must wait a few minutes. She came away from the writing table, sat down in an arm chair and waited.

Night had closed in. Heavy curtains were drawn across the tall windows. One electric lamp, which she had just turned on, threw a strong light on the writing table, on pens, stationery, an address book, a telephone book, a big blue and gold inkstand, some photographs which stood on a ledge protected by a tiny gilded rail. The rest of the room was in shadow. A low fire burned in the grate.

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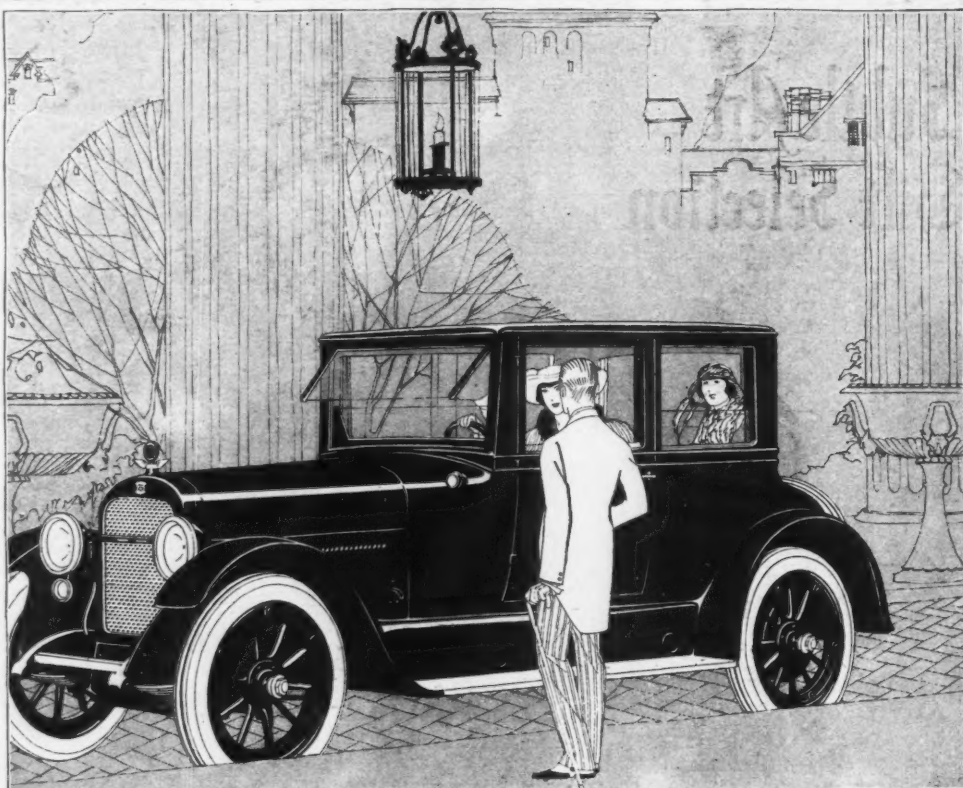
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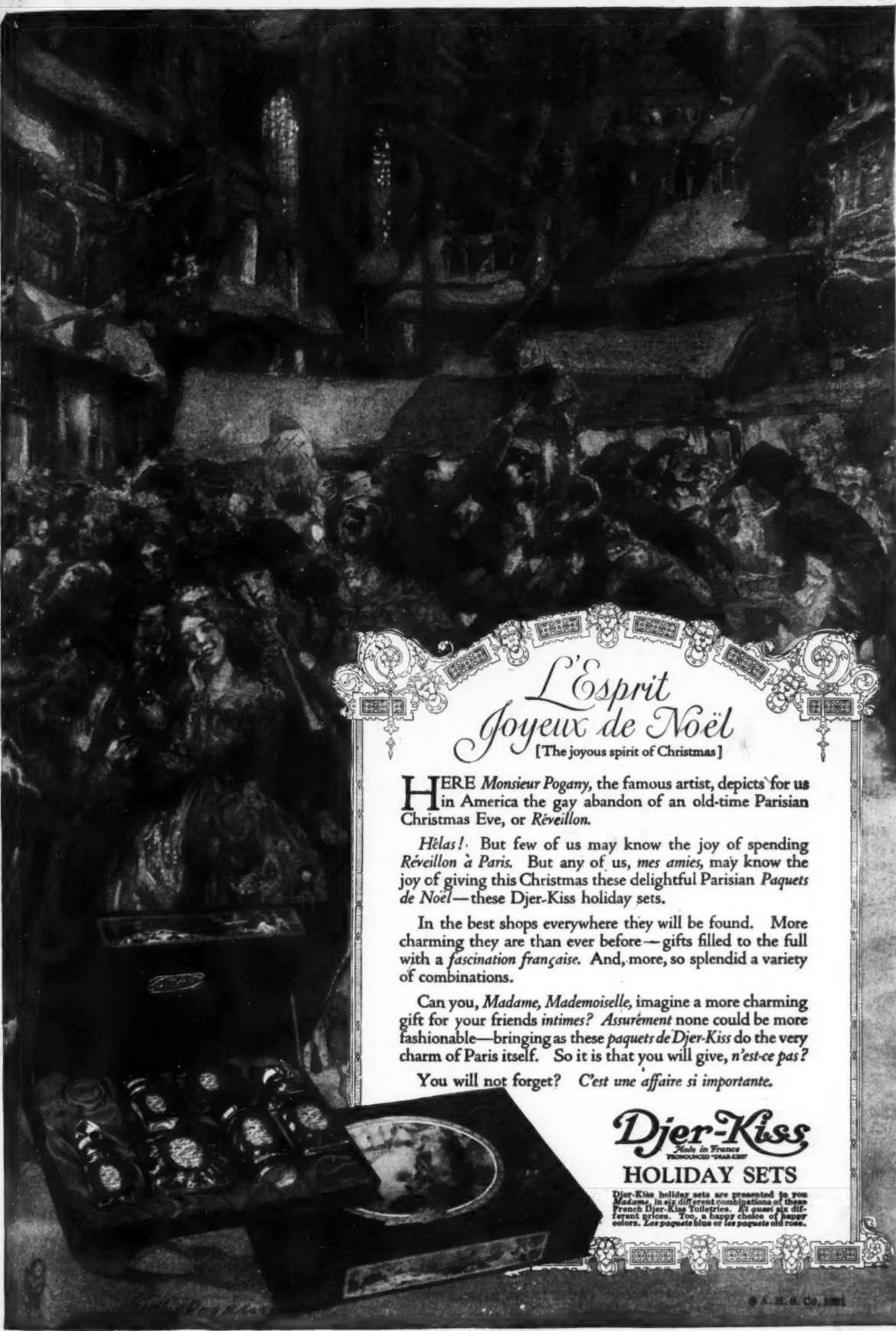
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